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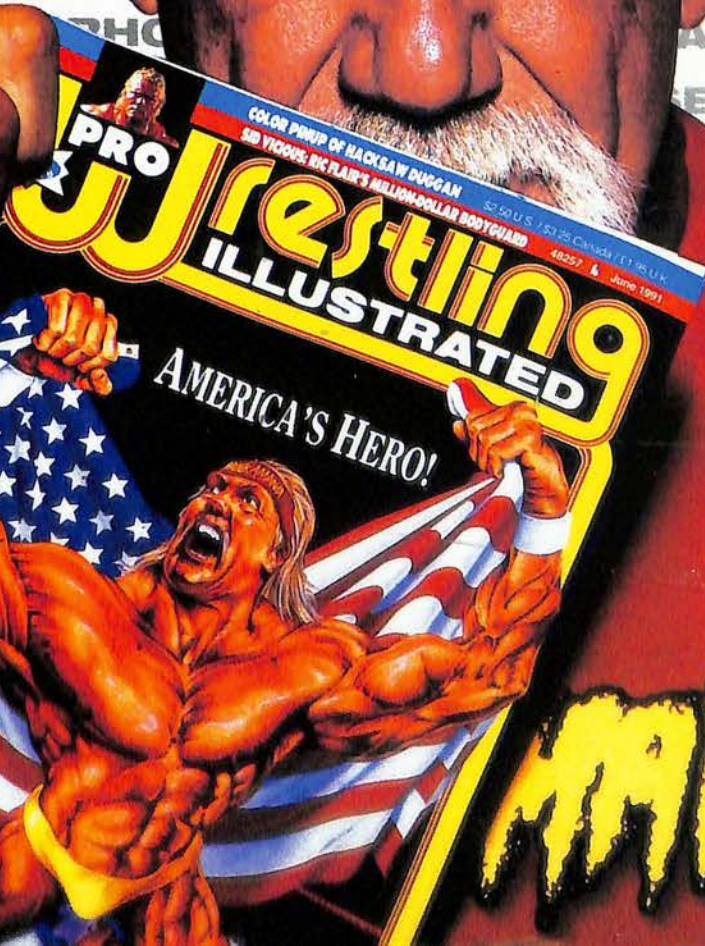
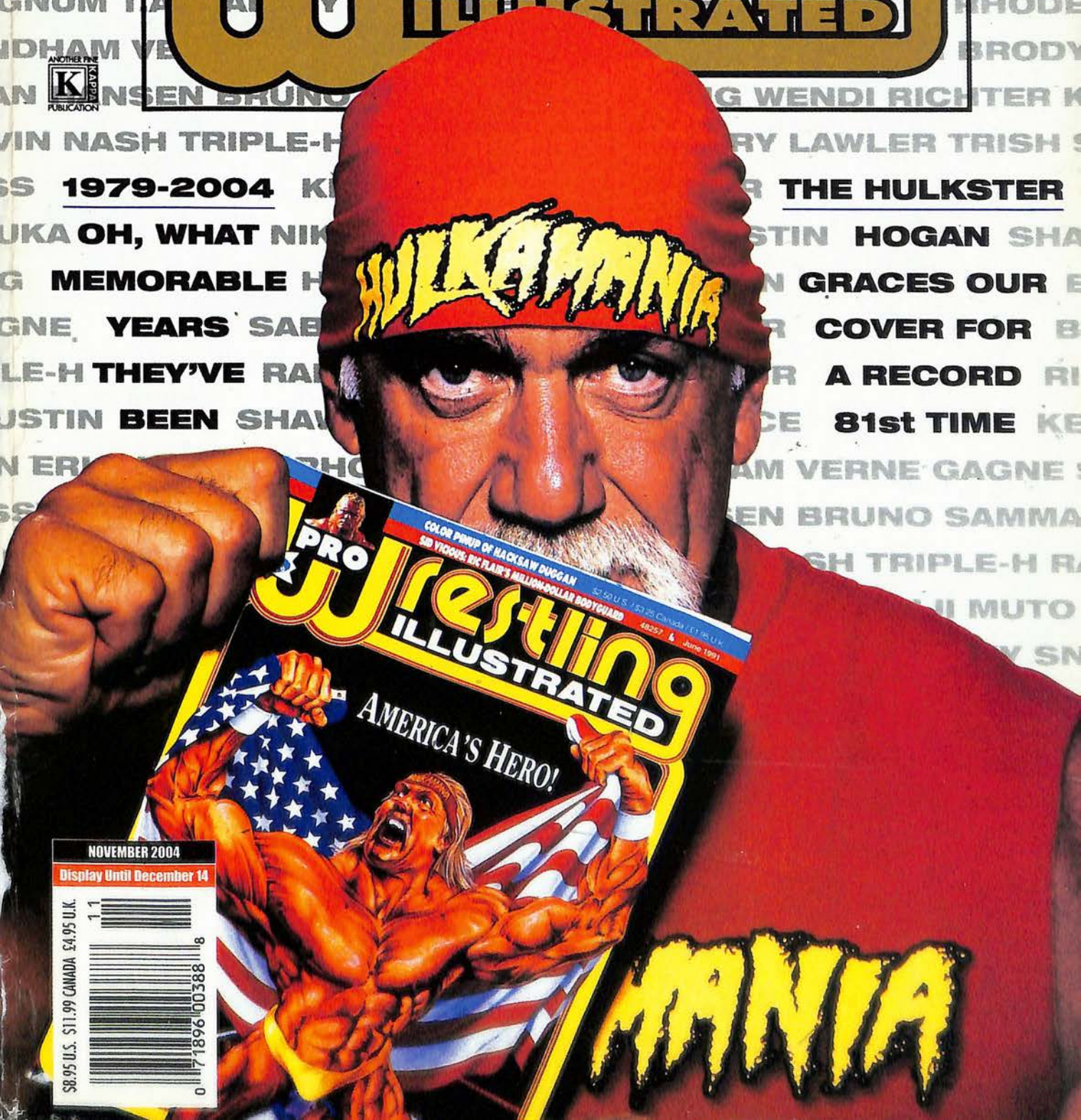
ISSUE



1979-2004

THE HULKSTER

HULKAMANIA



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NOVEMBER 2004

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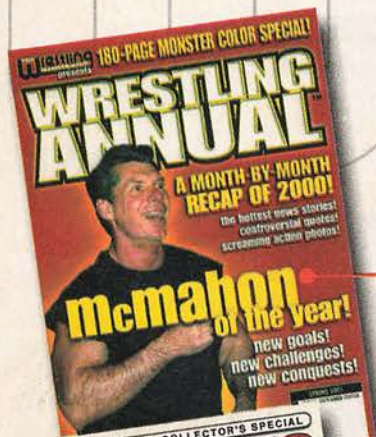
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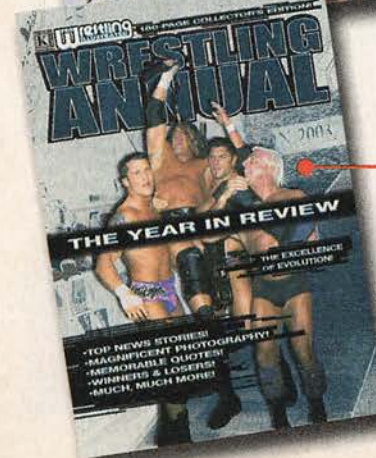
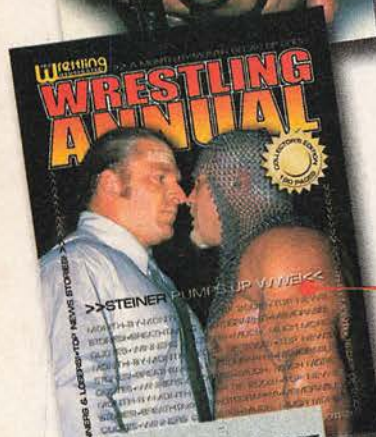
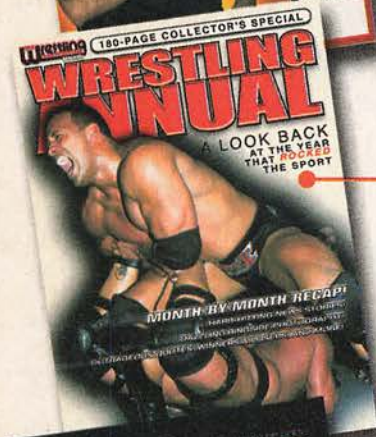
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Whether they've been working for *PWI* for 25 years or 25 weeks, each editor has been involved with the magazine since he or she became hooked on this sport. And they all have their favorites

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LOOKING BACK: FORMER EDITORS SHARE THEIR REMEMBRANCES OF PWI

We've tracked down eight of the men who have had a huge impact on *PWI* and once again gave them a forum for their thoughts

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OUR 25 FAVORITE PWI COVERS

A lot of thought goes into every *PWI* cover and we are happy with most of them, but here is the creme de la creme

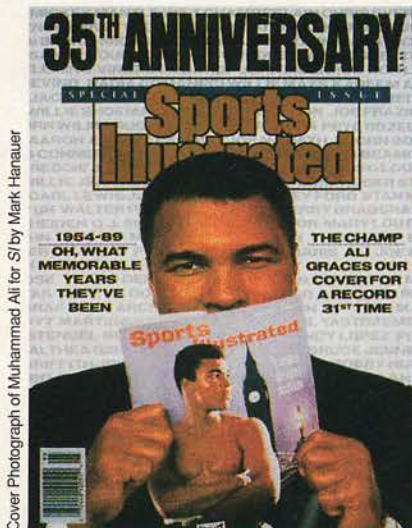
YOU MIGHT THINK that it's easy to nail down Hulk Hogan for a photo session. Heck, it's 2004 and Hulkamania hasn't exactly been running wild lately. Well, the cover of this, our 25th Anniversary edition of *PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED*, turned out exactly as I envisioned it. But nothing about it came easily, including getting the "Hulkster" in front of our camera.

Let's start with the design. If you've been a regular reader of that other sports magazine, *Sports Illustrated*, for a while, the cover might look familiar. As you can see, this cover is almost an exact replica of *SI*'s 35th Anniversary issue from 1989, with some obvious modifications. To use the *SI* design, we needed permission from the magazine's managing editor, but before I could get to him, I had to go through two other people (including former *PWI* writer Kostya Kennedy). Once I got *SI* on board, I needed the approval of the freelancer who photographed Muhammad Ali for their cover.

Now it was on to Hogan, the easy part. I've known Hulk since his first run in the WWF back in 1980 and have always found him to be media savvy and very cooperative. I told him my concept for the cover

was as follows: "Muhammad Ali is to *Sports Illustrated* what Hulk Hogan is to *PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED*." He was thrilled. "That's exactly right, brother," he exclaimed, making sure I knew that he was referring to the full analogy, not just the part about him and Ali.

He was more than willing, but finding the opportunity was not going to be a breeze. Hogan is a busy man. In between our initial conversation and the actual photo shoot, Hogan toured Japan, had his confrontation with



Cover Photograph of Muhammad Ali for *SI* by Mark Hanauer



Cover Photograph of Hulk Hogan for *PWI* by Duane Long

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Jeff Jarrett and subsequent flirtation with TNA, and had knee and hip surgery. And then there's the matter of the second wave of Hulkamania. Hogan in managing the career of his daughter, Brooke, a beautiful 16-year-old who is emerging as a pop music superstar.

Well, photographer Duane Long (who has been with *PWI* for the entire 25-year run) finally cornered the "Hulkster" at his Florida estate and the result is before you.

It's the 81st time Mr. Hogan has been featured on the cover of *PWI*, which is more than twice the amount of his nearest competitor, Sting (see page 50).

Hogan's first *PWI* cover shot was on *PWI*'s 10th issue, January 1981. By that time, Dusty Rhodes had been on five, including our inaugural issue, September 1979, along with Mil Mascaras. That issue has been unavailable through traditional sources since 1982. Most people who spend a pretty penny to get it on eBay have no idea what's even in it. By reprinting our debut issue, we might bum out a few collectors, but it's something we've wanted to do for a while, and this was the opportune time.

If you hate Stu Saks, *PWI*'s first and second issues are for you. From the third issue on, I have been a part of *PWI*, and, on a more personal note, *PWI* has been a part of me for the last 25 years of my life.

I have written opening columns for the 100th issue, the 10th anniversary, the 15th, the 20th, and now the 25th. I have thanked and re-thanked the editors, writers, photographers, and artists I have worked with (several of whom are heard from once again in this special issue). All of them have influenced the pages of *PWI*; some of them have influenced my life in a profound way.

Thank you, Dave, Brandi, Walt, Greg, Jim, Monica, Mike, Peter, Bill, Craig, Ken, Darlene, the list goes on and on—just as *PWI*'s reputation for being the *Sports Illustrated* of wrestling magazines does.

My deepest thanks, of course, go to our readers, some of whom have been with *PWI* longer than I have. We have undergone a lot of changes over the years, and continue to do so. We have always sought your input and worked hard to live up to the standards you demand.

My mentor, Peter King, wrote in his opening column back in September 1979: "For those familiar with wrestling magazines, we hope to become an essential part of your wrestling library. For those new to the world of wrestling journalism, we expect to make an old friend in a very short amount of time."

Here's to you, old friend.

Stu Saks
Publisher



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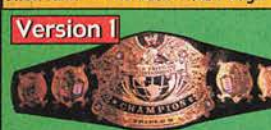
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Adrenaline 2 Packs Series 6

APA (WWEJ00081) \$20.00 each

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Batista & Randy Orton (WWEJ00084) \$20.00 each

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Test & Scott Steiner (WWEJ00086) \$20.00 each

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Big Show (WWEJ00107) \$15.00 each

Undertaker (WWEJ00108) \$15.00 each

Rey Mysterio (WWEJ00109) \$15.00 each

A-Train (WWEJ00110) \$15.00 each

Complete Set of 6 (WWEJ00111) \$75.00 set

Ruthless Aggression™ Series 9

Steve Austin (WWEJ00112) \$15.00 each

Matt Morgan (WWEJ00113) \$15.00 each

Matt Hardy (WWEJ00114) \$15.00 each

Jamie Noble (WWEJ00115) \$15.00 each

Rob Van Dam (WWEJ00116) \$15.00 each

Kane (WWEJ00117) \$15.00 each

Complete Set of 6 (WWEJ00118) \$70.00 set

Ruthless Aggression™ Series 10

Edge (WWEJ00122) \$15.00 each

Chris Benoit (WWEJ00123) \$15.00 each

Chris Jericho (WWEJ00124) \$15.00 each

Kurt Angle (WWEJ00125) \$15.00 each

Rey Mysterio (WWEJ00126) \$15.00 each

Ultimo Dragon (WWEJ00127) \$15.00 each

Complete Set of 6 (WWEJ00128) \$70.00 set

Backlash™ PPV Series 5

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Chris Benoit (WWEJ00302) \$15.00 each

Chris Jericho (WWEJ00303) \$15.00 each

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Undertaker Belt (WWEBELT06)

Intercontinental Championship Belt (WWEBELT09)

Tag Team Championship Belt (WWEBELT10)

Light-Heavyweight Championship Belt (WWEBELT12)

Raw Heavyweight Championship Belt (WWEBELT20)

Stone Cold Smokin' Skull Belt (WWEBELT05)

United States Championship Belt (WWEBELT21)

SmackDown!™ Tag Team Championship Belt (WWEBELT22)



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The 25 Most Prophetic PW/Stories

Headline: "Rick Steamboat Reveals: Ric Flair Will Turn Bad Again!"

Cover date: August 1981

Key excerpt: "I think he's gonna turn bad again," said Steamboat later that night when all had left the arena. He sipped a beer, his eyes darting from the floor to the ceiling, never focusing for any length of time on his guest ... 'He already talked as if his scientific wrestling career were in the past. I hoped it was just the moment ...'"

In retrospect: Call us soothsayers! Flair has wrestled as a heel in at least a handful of matches in the last 23 years!

Headline: "Rodney Piper: The Most Powerful Voice In Wrestling"

Cover date: August 1982

Key excerpt: "There is no doubt in anyone's mind: Roddy Piper will be a major force to contend with as wrestling continues into the decade of the '80s."

In retrospect: Typographical error aside (the Rodney mistake

was a whole different story), that headline stands up nicely. Didn't Roddy have a connection to the Rock 'n' Wrestling Connection?

Headline: "Hulkmania!"

Cover date: November 1982

Key excerpt: "'I'm glad to see that Hulkmania is spreading all across the country as fast as it is,' said Hogan. 'But I want to say one thing, and that has to do with the fact that even though I am incredibly successful on the screen, I'm not going to let my career in the ring suffer for it.'"

In retrospect: Hulkmania started in the AWA. Throw an extra "a" in the middle and a jump to the WWF, and then we saw some serious spreading all across the country! (A prophetic and real creative headline, don't you think?)

Headline: "Is Hulk Hogan Jealous Of Jesse Ventura's Hollywood Success?"

Cover date: January 1988

Key excerpt: "Hogan has almost no reason *not* to retire and become an actor. But his success in *Rocky III* is ancient history; people are quickly forgotten in Hollywood. Ventura, a man he despises, is the hot number in 1988."

In retrospect: Nah, Hogan was never jealous of Jesse. And it was pure coincidence that he announced he was running for President right after Ventura was elected governor of Minnesota.

Headline: "The Hogan-Savage-Elizabeth Triangle: Will The Megawoman Destroy The Megapowers?"

Cover date: January 1989

Key excerpt: "The 'Hulkster' is clearly begging for [Elizabeth's] attention while Savage tries to hold on to the woman he loves. It is a desperate struggle between two men who are used to getting what they want. A struggle that could soon lead to catastrophe."

In retrospect: Catastrophe, indeed! A huge feud exploded soon after the magazine went to press, and Elizabeth was at the center of it. And Savage is still throwing out challenges to Hogan, isn't he?

Headline: "Ted Turner Buys The NWA: What Does It Mean For Wrestling?"

Cover date: April 1989

Key excerpt: "'We're not butting heads with Vince,' (newly appointed President of the Universal Wrestling Corporation Jack) Petrik insisted. 'If we can be a fraction of Vince's success, why, I think we'd be very happy.' But a fraction of Vince's success might not be enough to please Turner. It is well-known by insiders that there were problems between Turner and McMahon during the WWF's short stretch on TBS back in 1984 ... If those hard feelings do in fact exist, Turner

Photo By Dave Vane

RODNEY PIPER: THE MOST POWERFUL VOICE IN WRESTLING

Roddy Piper is the Mid-Atlantic champion and commentator for the widely viewed *Georgia Championship Wrestling* program. As his hold on the title grows stronger and the ratings of GCW continue to increase, Piper is in the unique position of gradually becoming the most powerful man in the sport

THE OPENING CREDITS flash by and the audience cheers. Host Gordon Solle bids everyone welcome and in seconds the first match is underway. It's another edition of *Georgia Championship Wrestling*, the most widely viewed wrestling program on the air today.

It is usually during that first match that Solle is joined by a second commentator. He is the man who adds the wrestler's perspective to each contest. He is the man who holds the Mid-Atlantic title. He is fast becoming the single most powerful man in all of wrestling.



Piper gives Brad Armstrong during a television interview on his father Bob's book on himself. Brad is a lot more cordial to Gene Hernandez, who has brought along a host of champions to, as he said, celebrate his retirement (before night's battle) than he did with Bob Armstrong (before he had the emotion of wrestling him).

Yet the two Piper forces are strong, and the following letter is representative of dozens of pieces of mail our office receives each day.



might be willing to put even more of his resources behind the NWA."

In retrospect: Six years later, the Monday night war was born!

Headline: "Kerry Von Erich: 'Sid Vicious Is The Most Awesome Man I've Ever Wrestled!'"

Cover date: May 1989

Key excerpt: "I have to admit he's got guts," said Kerry afterward. "He's got unlimited potential, too. He's one of those guys who, from the first time you see him, you know is going to dominate the sport for years to come. The only problem is that he's a little bit unbalanced in the head."

In retrospect: "Potential" and "unbalanced"—those words haunted Sid for more than a decade. Okay, so he didn't ever really dominate. But that "awesome" quote is one of the most repeated in *PWI* history.

Headline: "When Will Beefcake Turn Against Hogan?"

Cover date: December 1989

Key excerpt: "[Hogan] is absolutely full of himself. When you're standing in the ring after a big win and he starts hogging up all the glory, it can be a little annoying. I wouldn't be surprised if Beefcake and Hogan were enemies by the time Christmas rolls around."

In retrospect: Paul Orndorff was right. They were enemies by Christmas. Christmas of 1994, but Christmas nonetheless.

Headline: "(Addams) Family Entertainment? The WWF Is Out Of Control!"

Cover date: April 1992

Key excerpt: "The WWF has long promoted its product as 'all-family' entertainment, but during the last year the federation has been overrun by violent acts of the

most sadistic sort—and many families don't want to subject their children to the horror!"

In retrospect: You might say that the WWF was developing a bit of an "Attitude" in '92.

Headline: "Are You Crazy Enough To Root For Cactus Jack?"

Cover date: May 1993

HOGAN VS. STING?



Key excerpt: "With his stringy hair, beady eyes, unkempt appearance, and overactive salivary glands, Cactus Jack does not fit the stereotype of the warm, loveable, cuddly bear you'd love to hold and stroke."

In retrospect: *PWI* was plenty crazy to suggest that Cactus Jack could be a fan favorite. If only he had an alter-ego that was warm and cuddly ...

Headline: "Superstar Summit: Sting & Hogan Said It! *PWI* Reveals It!"

Cover date: September 1993

Key excerpt: "Consider their postmatch party meeting: When Sting and Hogan saw each other, they didn't head off in opposite directions. They went toward each

other. They were friendly, but spoke in guarded whispers ... Sting wouldn't comment on the meeting, but he later confided to friends that he and Hogan spoke of wrestling's enormous potential in a perfect world."

In retrospect: A year later, WCW held a ticker-tape parade to welcome the "Hulkster" to WCW.

Last May they had a "Superstar Summit"

in Japan. Now Sting is guest-starring on Hogan's new TV series, *Thunder In Paradise*, and the action on the set has been stirring. Who knows—

their next meeting could be in the ring ...

By Dave Lander

THEY HAD BEEN such a long time. For years, wrestling fans have been anticipating the ultimate clash of their superstars. In one corner, there's WCW's most popular star, Hulk Hogan. In the other, the most popular wrestler of all time, Sting.

If they ever did come to blows, when would it happen? New York's Madison Square Garden? Atlantic City? Toronto? Or Japan's Tokyo Dome? ... That's right—a Japan. That's right—a Japan. That's right—a Japan.



Headline: "Hogan vs. Sting? Yes! And We Have The Photos!"

Cover date: June 1994

Key excerpt: "I'd be lying to you if I told you I didn't think a little bit about what it would be like to wrestle Hulk for real, in a wrestling ring somewhere, with about 50,000 fans screaming their lungs out for us. Maybe someday."

In retrospect: Their first "match" was in a swamp, as part of an episode of the TV show *Thunder In Paradise*. Three-plus years later, we were calling their Starrcade showdown the Match of the Century.

Headline: "WCW Civil War! Will Ex-WWF Stars Spark A Revolution?"

Cover date: February 1995

Key excerpt: "They're taking over the whole federation—if they

In retrospect: Revolution was an understatement. A year later, we had three letters for ya: N-W-O!

Cover date: June 1995

In retrospect: This became a much bigger issue three years later when Mick Foley started falling off cages and such. Remember the infamous *20/20* interview he did with his wife? The scary mental problems he experienced? The decision to get out before he did further damage to himself?

Headline: "Screw The World—I'll Do It My Way!' Steve Austin's Timetable To The Title"

Key excerpt: "The bottom line is that it will happen when it happens, and only when I say it will happen," he insisted. "Sure there are things out of my control. I know that. But my goal coming into this sport was to win the big one. Nothing that's happened yet has distracted me from that."

In retrospect: That quote came from Austin when he was still in WCW and in pursuit of the WCW World title. He had to jump to the WWF to win the big one. He did it in a way no one else ever did.

Cover date: May 1996

Key excerpt: "When the WWF allowed Dustin-Goldust to place the likeness of Razor Ramon on his outfit and pursue a romantic relationship with him, it went too far—way too far. And the former 'Natural' had become 'The Un-natural.'"

In retrospect: Yep, we detected the start of a new trend in the WWF, one in which the boundaries

of good taste were being tested. Necrophilia and HLA were to come in about six years.

Headline: "Great Expectations:
End Hulkamania! Topple The Giant!
Seize The Gold!"

Cover date: September 1996

Key excerpt: "WCW had a parade for Hulk Hogan's arrival. Diesel will have to create his own fanfare (and probably a new identity). There are certainly high expectations for the 7', 356-pound superstar who left the WWF on bad terms with the fans."

In retrospect: Wasn't Kevin Nash one of the guys who had a little something to do with that NWO thing?

Headline: "PWI Special Analysis: An Undertaker-Bearer Split Would Be Best For Mankind"

Cover date: December 1996

Key excerpt: "The most logical beneficiary of an Undertaker-Bearer split would be Mankind. Formerly known as Cactus Jack, Mankind has always been a wayward, unfocused wrestler who jumped from feud to feud without any eye on winning a major title."

In retrospect: 'Taker and Bearer did split, and Mankind and Bearer did become a team. It was just the spark Mankind needed.

Headline: "A Rocky Road Ahead? The WWF Is Expecting Too Much Of Rocky Maivia"

Cover date: April 1997

Key excerpt: "He has the potential to go even farther than his father and grandfather, and they were great," assessed legendary manager Capt. Lou Albano. It's hard to imagine a new wrestler entering the competitive WWF riding such a wave of expectations.



Already he is being heralded—perhaps even groomed—as the WWF's next big superstar."

In retrospect: The WWF did push him too hard too quickly, though in the long run, it wasn't expecting too much, as long it wasn't expecting anything more than one of the biggest superstars in wrestling history and one of the hottest young actors in Hollywood.

Headline: "Keep Vince's Name In Your Rolodex, Bret! You're In For A Tough Time In WCW!"

Cover date: April 1998

Key excerpt: "If Hart thinks he will have anything else but a very rocky road in WCW, he's in for a big surprise. Bret should definitely keep Vince's phone number handy. Maybe dealing with Shawn Michaels wasn't so bad after all."

In retrospect: We were concerned that so many old nemeses were waiting for him in WCW. Politics, mismanagement, and a kick to the head from Goldberg were what *really* doomed him!

Headline: "Vince Mc(Mad)Man! He's Crossed The Bottom Line ... Now He'll Pay!"

Cover date: November 1998

Key excerpt: "McMahon thought he could balance his responsibilities as WWF head with his new role as 'corporate bully' just as he had juggled his duties as owner and broadcaster ... Now he is a participant, and that makes him a physical target."

In retrospect: Oh, he paid all right. Paid and paid. Paid not only Steve Austin, but The Rock, Triple H, The Undertaker ...

Headline: "No Evil! Can Today's Fans Accept The Warrior's Creed?"

Cover date: January 1999

Key excerpt: "The sport's fan

base is growing daily and is larger now than when Warrior was at his peak as WWF World champion. If he listens to the fans who are speaking to him, he won't necessarily like what he hears. Eventually there may be choice words and one-finger salutes aimed his way."

In retrospect: Ultimately, those fans told him to shine that creed up real nice, turn it sideways, and stick it straight up ...

Headline: "Big Game Hunter! SummerSlam '99 Starts Open Season On The WWF!"

Cover date: January 2000

Key excerpt: "'Don't think for one minute that I'm letting up on anyone just because I've got this strap now,' said Helmsley. 'This is just starting. Now my job is to keep the belt. That's just what I intend to do—by any means necessary.'"

In retrospect: Truer words were never spoken by "The Game." No one realized that "by any means necessary" would eventually include becoming Vince McMahon's son-in-law.

Headline: "Wrestle-McMania!

Power ... Greed ... Pride! Why The Peace Can't Last!"

Cover date: September 2000

Key excerpt: "The 'Greater Power' scheme saw Vince join The Undertaker. Jumping sides is a shortcut to generating attention, and Vince is the master. Shane and Stephanie are avid students. Shane has switched sides almost as often as Vince, and Stephanie—who's been an active player in the WWF for less than a year—has already switched once."

In retrospect: We quit keeping track of McMahon heel and fan favorite turns long ago. It was giving us a headache.

Headline: "Hulk Hogan: WWF Fans Want Him Back!"

Cover date: March 2001

Key excerpt: "Imagine Hogan confronting The Rock: 'Whatcha gonna do when ...' Rock holds his hand to Hogan's face: 'It doesn't matter whatcha gonna do!'"

In retrospect: Imagine it? We lived it at. Fans at WrestleMania X8 in Toronto lived that match and loved Hogan even when they weren't supposed to love him.

HULK HOGAN

WWF FANS
WANT
HIM
BACK!



By Harry Sheeth

ROUGHLY SHOCKED FANS around the world when he admitted running over Steve Austin. The chaos of backstage and inside of disappointment from the 17,000 or so fans in attendance at the *Armageddon* event in Australia will become part of wrestling lore. But there was another reaction, perhaps not as shocking, but every bit as noteworthy: *Did you know?*

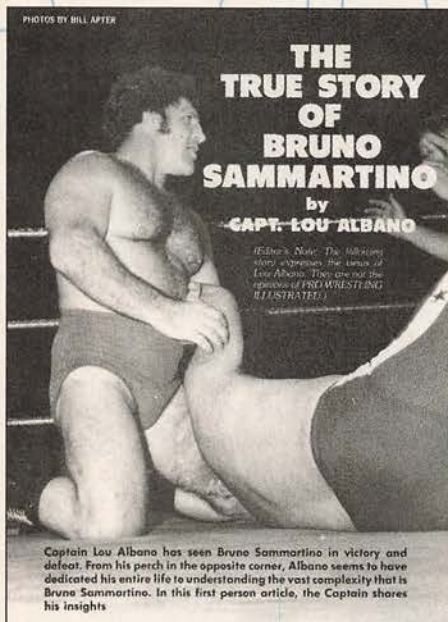
Since around the WWF of always promoting "the great white hope," he held a lot of the champions who had fought the WWF during its 25-year history. Buddy Rogers ... Stone Cold Steve Austin ... Hulk Hogan.

Hulk Hogan: A spontaneous whop of cheers echoed throughout the arena. The reaction of Rogers, Stone Cold, and Austin didn't matter. Steve Austin's utterance of the name "Hulk Hogan" that got the fans. The only person (Hulk) mentioned who got a bigger pop was, of course, Steve Austin, the other of the three.

The positive reaction for Hogan, even in a casual reference, is an interesting way of showing how much of Hogan's fans. However, across America (and it, Steve Austin heard it. The Rock heard it. Most importantly, both Vince McMahon and Hulk Hogan heard it. **PP**

The larger Hogan side out, the more the same derivatives in reaction. When WWF "has really made a name for itself," said "I think the notion of Hogan being a really overrated," said WCW analyst Donald Wayne. "Everyone on the Internet says how they're sick and tired of Hogan. How Hogan looks like a younger wrestler, and how fans love him. Well, I haven't seen a great comeback in WCW since the release of Hulk Hogan. I think Hogan became too comfortable and he was used as a scapegoat for WCW's bigger problems. Hogan's recent performance in WCW has been a disaster. I know he's capable of so much more. Perhaps a jump to the WWF is exactly what Hogan

The 25 Most Pathetic PWI Stories



"I'll give Sammartino credit. He's gotten far on no talent. You take a guy with a mashed-in, ugly face, a misshapen body and no speed or strength and somehow, somehow, he becomes champion. Well, I can't figure it out. And if I can't, no one can."



When the fools at this magazine asked me to write a story about Bruno Sammartino, I had to go to the bathroom. Hey, I'd just eaten, and thinking about pasta-puss makes me nauseous. But I owe it to my fans, the guys who want the truth. So this is what I think about meatball mind. The man's gotta shape. The man's washed up. The man's got no moves left. The man's over-the-hill. Wait, wait, I'll document everything. I'll give Sammartino credit. He's gotten far on no talent. You take a guy with a mashed-in, ugly face, a misshapen body and no speed or strength and somehow, somehow, he becomes champion. Well, I can't figure it out. And if I can't, no one can. Maybe people can't wrestle spaghetti brain because they're too busy laughing at him. I am. Or maybe the stench of garlic crumples their will. Possible. In any case, I'm dealing with him because someone has to pull back the Sammartino legend and see what there really is to him. Old provolone. Hah, that's a good one.



"The Little Legend" is about to show his true style (above). Note the classical fist. Quite sharp! Bruno wrestles like an old shopping bag woman. See how he has to strain to throw a heel, Jerry Valdez (below).

Headline: "The True Story Of Bruno Sammartino," by Capt. Lou Albano

Cover date: November 1979

Key excerpt: "Maybe people can't wrestle spaghetti-brain because they're too busy laughing at him. I am. Or maybe the stench of garlic crumples their will. Possible. In any case, I'm dealing with him because someone has to pull back the Sammartino legend and see what there really is to him. Old provolone. Hah, that's a good one."

In retrospect: We couldn't have gotten Capt. Lou to be more politically incorrect if we tried. "Pasta-puss," "meatball-mind," "calzone-mouth," "Italian scallion," and "lasagna-breath" were among the other insults he hurled. Why did we give him this forum anyway?

Headline: "The Ancient Secret That Makes Hussein Arab Invincible"

Cover date: December 1980

Key excerpt: "I was thumbing through a book on Arab culture when I saw a picture of Hussein Arab's

boot. I blinked a few times to clear my head and then read the startling caption. It disclosed this rare boot had been stolen from the British Museum nearly 250 years ago. And has never been found ... I called a distinguished professor at Columbia University and begged help. He told me this boot allegedly possessed magical powers."

In retrospect: Stu Saks, now our publisher, still has a framed copy of this story on his wall at home. He says it's the most ambitious investigative work he ever did.

Headline: "Michael Hayes' Dream—Mil Mascaras: Freebird Number 4"

Cover date: December 1983

Key excerpt: "What is our team lacking?" Hayes asked, then answered. 'A masked Mexican superstar. Are any of us Mexicans? No. Do any of us wear masks? No. Well then, we have to find someone who makes up for that. Any suggestions?'"

In retrospect: Could you picture Mascaras guzzling Jack Daniel's through his mask?

Headline: "Women's Wrestling Comes Of Age: Is Wendi Richter More Popular Than Hulk Hogan?"

Cover date: April 1986

Key excerpt: "By many accounts, the chief attraction of WrestleMania was not the main event featuring Hulk Hogan and Mr. T against Paul Orndorff and Roddy Piper. It was Richter's bid to regain her title, an accomplishment rewarded by the loudest ovation Madison Square Garden heard that night."

In retrospect: Twelve years later, we followed up with "Is Jacquelyn More Popular Than Steve Austin?"

Headline: "Randy Savage Proves ... Hulkamania Is Dead! Will WrestleMania II Make It Live Again?"

Cover date: June 1986

Key excerpt: "If Hulkamania isn't dead, its condition is serious. Another blockbuster promotion may be the only way to save it, and with WrestleMania II conveniently around the corner, Randy Savage's claims should be proven true or false shortly."

In retrospect: Yeah, Hogan and Hulkamania were on their way out in 1986. We barely heard from him after that.

Headline: "NWA & WWF Gain Momentum: Is Wrestling Headed Toward A Two-Party System?"

Cover date: October 1987

Key excerpt: "The two-party system may rule American politics, but rest assured it doesn't rule professional wrestling. If there are any doubters, the smaller promotions could quiet them by paraphrasing the famous Mark Twain line: 'The reports of our death,' they might say, 'have been greatly exaggerated.'"

In retrospect: Okay, so a lot can and did change in 14 years, but who would have thought we'd see a one-party system in 2001?

25.25.25 ILLUSTRATED 25 lists of 25 items from 25 years

quer yet another title usurper."

In retrospect: Not only did Hogan team with Brutus Beefcake against Money Inc. on the undercard, but after Yokozuna beat Bret Hart for the World title, the "Hulkster" mightily strode down the aisle, accepted an open challenge from the hefty Samoan, and conquered yet another title usurper.

that would make WrestleMania X great. The one match worthy of the big event's 10th anniversary blast."

In retrospect: We got our wish! And we got a classic! It ended in a disqualification, but it was still something so special. Our only regret was that it was so special that it totally overshadowed a Shawn Michaels-

Cover date: May 1995

Key excerpt: "PWI has learned that, on the day after Starrcade, Vader and Race huddled with a team of high-priced lawyers and discussed a possible \$200-million breach-of-contract suit against WCW, Bockwinkel, and Hogan."

In retrospect: The reason for filing such a lawsuit? Vader being repeatedly denied World title shots. On second thought, given how lawsuit crazy our society has become, maybe such an astronomical figure wasn't so ridiculous after all.

Headline: "Riot On The Set! The Untold Story Of Bret Hart's *Lonesome Dove* Debut"

Cover date: June 1995

Key excerpt: "According to several employees close to the production of [the TV show *Lonesome Dove*], Owen Hart tried to continue his war with his brother by disrupting production and aggravating directors to no end. There was an actual physical confrontation between the brothers, proving that there are no boundaries to the hatred Owen holds for Bret."

In retrospect: Absolutely shocking that *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Variety*, and all the other Hollywood trade publications never got a sniff of this, um, strange story.

Headline: "Why Mabel Is Diesel's Championship Nightmare"

Cover date: December 1995

Key excerpt: "As crazy as it sounds, despite his many weaknesses, he could be the perfect wrestler to dethrone Diesel!"

In retrospect: A lot of people consider Kevin Nash vastly overrated, and their arguments might be valid, but sorry, mentioning Nash and the man destined to become Viscera in the same breath is a *lot* crazier than it sounds! Mabel as King of the Ring



Headline: "Compelled To Make Children Cry—But Why? A Psychologist Analyzes Doink The Clown"

Cover date: November 1993

Key excerpt: "There is reason to believe he suffers from the 'middle child syndrome' and is rebelling against his parents by punishing all children. Perhaps there was a time when young Doink's parents took his brothers to the circus and left him home."

In retrospect: Yup, we devoted four pages to a psychologist's theories on a stinkin' clown!

Headline: "Lex Luger vs. Yokozuna: The Match That Would Make WrestleMania X A 10!"

Cover date: May 1994

Key excerpt: "Luger vs. Yokozuna. That's it. Case closed. The one match

Razor Ramon ladder match that was pretty decent, too.

Headline: "Special Analysis: The Demise of Wrestling's Megagroups"

Cover date: June 1994

Key excerpt: "If even a group as powerful and dedicated as The Four Horsemen can dissolve, there is no hope for anyone. Wrestling is where individuals thrive, where tag teams provide the excitement that comes of combined effort. There's really no sense in alliances."

In retrospect: The NWO ... De-Generation X ... The Triple Threat ... Evolution ... shall we go on?

Headline: "Vader's Next Bout: In A Court Of Law? The Opponent: WCW! The Potential Payday: \$200,000,000!"

was a stretch. Mabel as WWF champ? Are you kidding?

Headline: "Lex-zilla! Luger's Plan To Conquer Japan"

Cover date: October 1996

Key excerpt: "Like the fictional creature who conquered Japan, Lex Luger has his own set of plans for the Land of the Rising Sun. His goal is to attack and conquer and become America's uncrowned king of Japan."

In retrospect: Forget the story (although we might have stretched the truth by writing that tapes of Luger's matches in America had achieved collector's status in Japan). Who was the graphic artist who put Luger's body on Godzilla's body in that layout? And who was the editor who approved it? You should have seen Luger's face when *he* saw it!

Headline: "Why Is This Man Smiling? 'Because I'm Getting Paid To Mutilate!'"

Cover date: November 1996

Key excerpt: "Promoters around the world should pay attention to this man ... [Yoshi] Kwan, whose considerable martial arts skills could make him a title contender in any major federation, apparently chooses to wrestle in smaller federations against lesser competition so he can victimize easier prey."

In retrospect: What was Yoshi Kwan against Larry Valentine and Gypsy Joe in All-State Wrestling in Tennessee doing in *PWI*?

Headline: "Mark Their Words: Krof-fat & Furnas—'We'll Be Number One In Your Ratings In Six Months'"

Cover date: February 1997

Key excerpt: "A team with the talent and track record of Krof-fat and Furnas will not likely be relegated to the opening matches of WWF shows. WWF promoters are well-aware of how good they are and what they've



accomplished in the past. Krof-fat and Furnas will settle for no less than having those leather belts strapped around their waists."

In retrospect: A more apropos headline would have been, "We'll Have Faded Into Obscurity In Six Months."

Headline: "DDP vs. Chris Benoit: The Night The Flock Left Their Enemies A-Gassed!"

Cover date: July 1998

Key excerpt: "As the ring was being taken down, the attendant found a crudely made machine with rusted fan blades on a small motor, along with remnants of dry ice. Who put it there? The evidence pointed directly to Benoit's enemies: Raven and his Flock."

In retrospect: Your basic stink bomb under the ring ruined the match story. Maybe this one belonged on the "25 Headlines That Were Rejected After Less Than 25 Minutes of Discussion" list.

Headline: "Bill Alfonso: He's Found The Man Who Will Keep Sabu & Van Dam In Line!"

Cover date: May 1999

Key excerpt: "It is [Mike] Lozansky who has galvanized Sabu and Van Dam and made them concentrate on working together rather than trying to tear each other apart."

In retrospect: We reasoned that Alfonso was closely scouting Lozansky, who had been wrestling both Sabu and RVD, and was ready to replace either one of them in the team if need be. Which one of them do you think laughed hardest when reading that?

Headline: "Three-Time UFC Titlist Ron Waterman: Why He Will Accomplish What Dan Severn Couldn't"

Cover date: July 2002

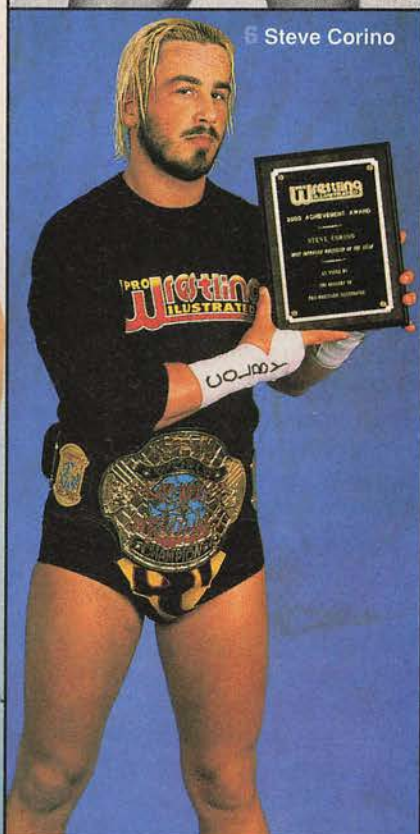
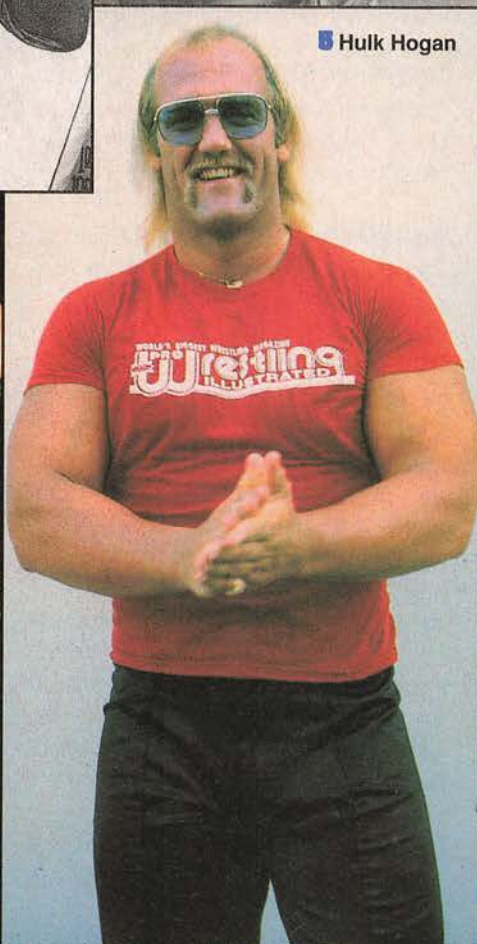
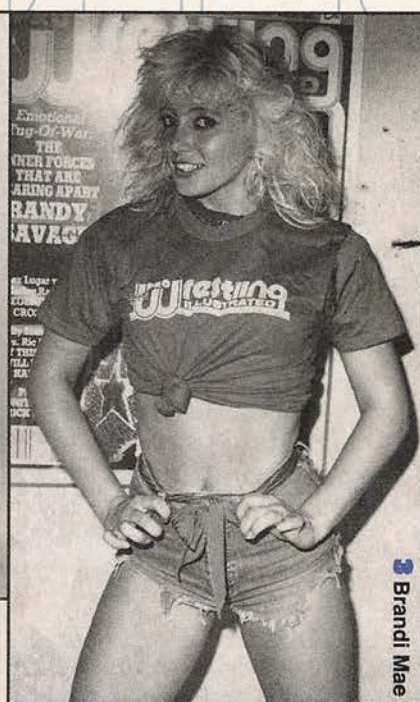
Key excerpt: "'H2O has taken to pro wrestling like a duck to water,' said OVW promoter Jim Cornette. 'Ron came in here with his head on straight. He knew enough to know that he didn't know everything. Wrestling and UFC are worlds apart, and Ron knew it. He has been an incredible student of the sweet science of wrestling. I consider him to be the closest thing to a can't-miss prospect I've seen in years.'"

In retrospect: He could and he did miss.

25.25.25

25 lists of 25 items from 25 years

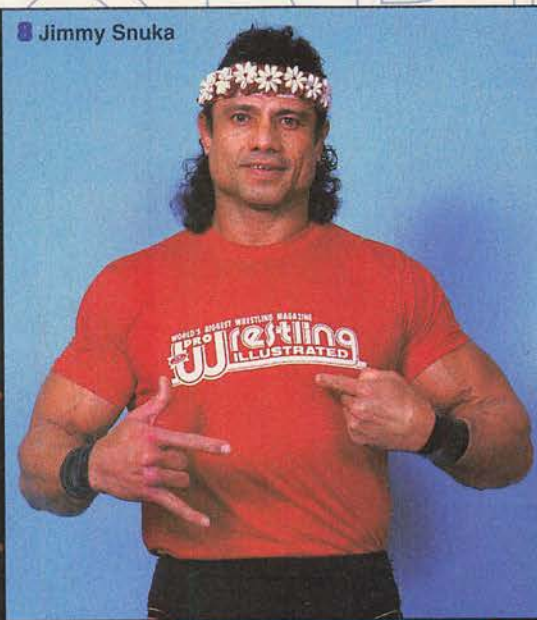
25 Best Dressed



7 Billy Jack Haynes



8 Jimmy Snuka



9 Magnum T.A.



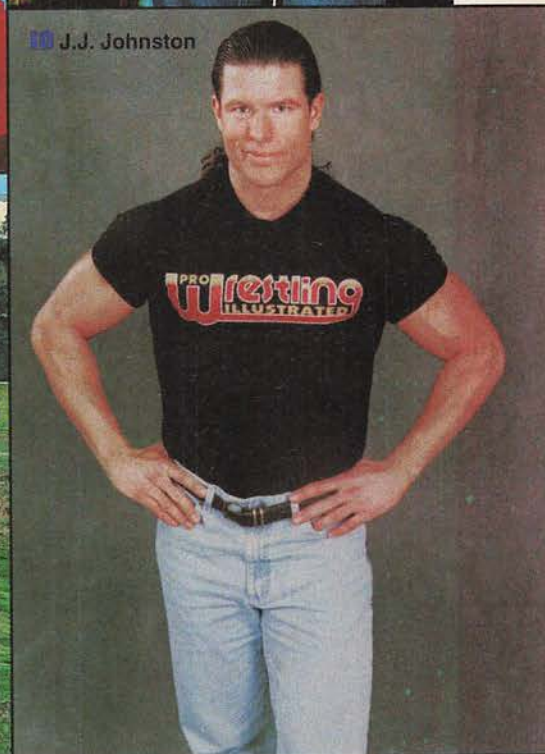
13 Kevin, David, & Kerry Von Erich



11 Iceman King Parsons



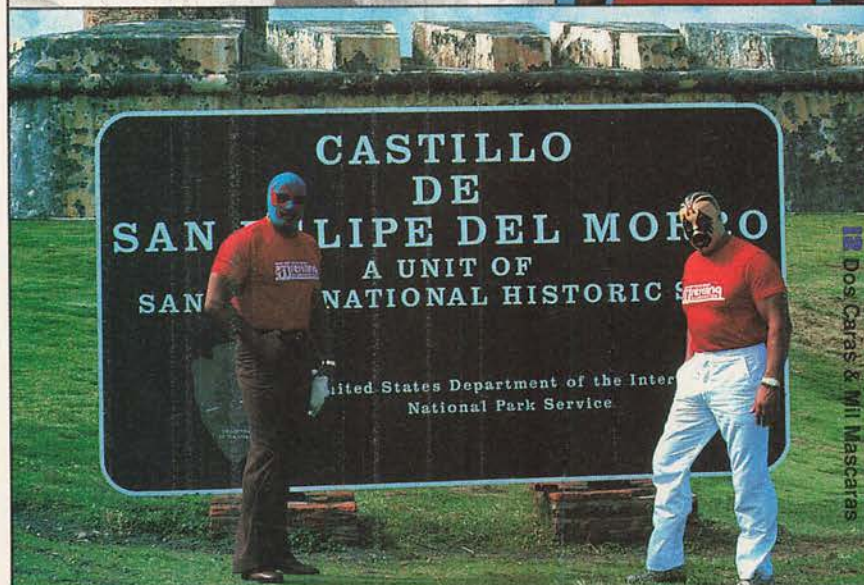
10 J.J. Johnston



CASTILLO
DE
SAN FELIPE DEL MORRO
A UNIT OF
SAN JUAN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

12 Dos Caras & Mil Mascaras



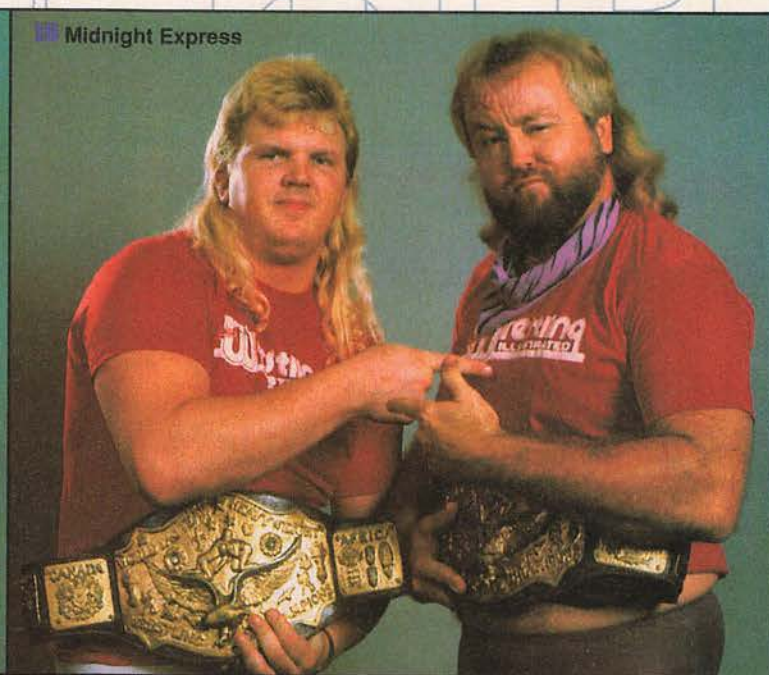
25.25.25

25 lists of 25 items from 25 years

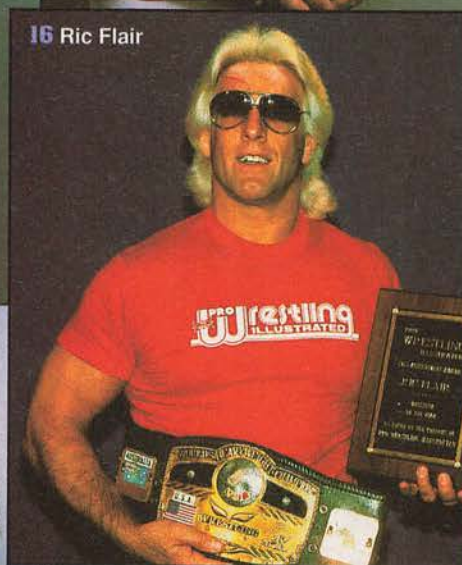
14 Madusa



15 Midnight Express



16 Ric Flair



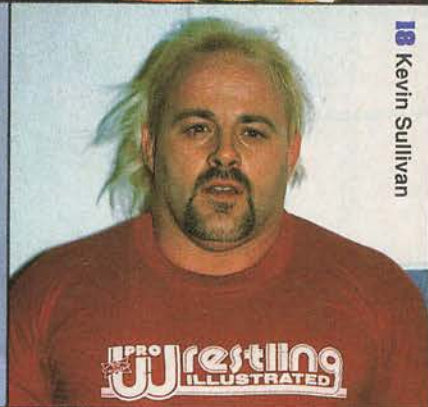
19 Missy Hyatt



17 Dallas Page & Diamond Doll



18 Kevin Sullivan



20 Jerry Lawler



21 Terry Gordy



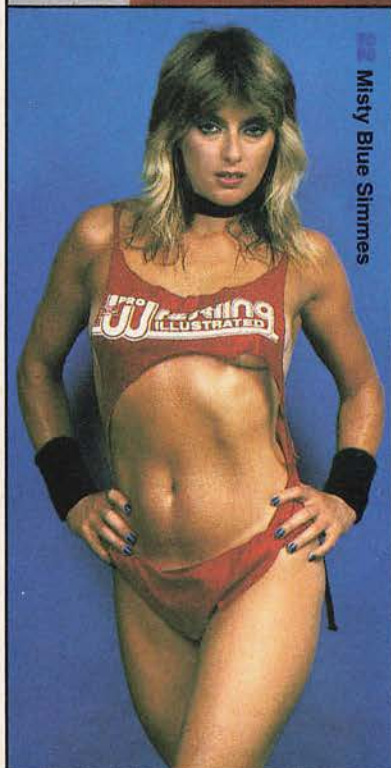
23 Lex Luger



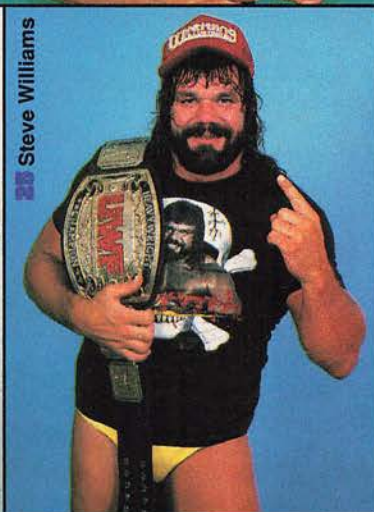
24 Nord the Barbarian



22 Misty Blue Simmes



25 Steve Williams



25.25.25

25 lists of 25 items from 25 years

25 Writers Who Would Have Been Just Perfect For *PWI*

- 1 Stephen King
- 2 Charles Dickens
- 3 Dr. Seuss
- 4 Michael Crichton
- 5 Mark Twain
- 6 Mick Foley
- 7 Neil Simon
- 8 Miss Manners
- 9 J.K. Rowling
- 10 William Shakespeare
- 11 Gene Roddenberry
- 12 Franklin Dixon
- 13 Rod Serling
- 14 Ernest Hemingway
- 15 Danielle Steele
- 16 Jules Verne
- 17 Jim Ross
- 18 Robert Louis Stevenson
- 19 Tennessee Williams
- 20 Barbara Cartland
- 21 Arthur Conan Doyle
- 22 Norman Mailer
- 23 Raymond Carver
- 24 John Grisham
- 25 Vince Russo

25 Things Matt Brock Wouldn't/Couldn't Eat or Drink

- 1 Sushi
- 2 Bean and cheese burritos
- 3 Debra's cookies
- 4 Slim Jims
- 5 Hillbilly Jim's moonshine
- 6 Any Stacker 2 products
- 7 New Coke
- 8 Tofu
- 9 Soy milk
- 10 Veggie burgers
- 11 Frozen yogurt
- 12 Bean curd
- 13 Protein bars
- 14 WWF ice cream bars
- 15 Hummus
- 16 Light beer
- 17 Seaweed salad
- 18 Refried beans
- 19 Vegetable lasagna
- 20 Cauliflower
- 21 Perrier
- 22 Escargot
- 23 Calamari
- 24 Ribera's steak (kangaroo)
- 25 What The Rock is cookin'

25 Men Liz Hunter Would Have But Didn't/Couldn't Marry

- 1 Rick Rude
- 2 Rick Martel
- 3 Sting
- 4 Bret Hart
- 5 Kerry Von Erich
- 6 Lance Von Erich
- 7 David Von Erich
- 8 Kevin Von Erich
- 9 Rick Steamboat
- 10 Billy Jack Haynes
- 11 Shawn Michaels
- 12 The Rock
- 13 Edge
- 14 Curt Hennig
- 15 Tom Zenk
- 16 Tito Santana
- 17 Ric Flair
- 18 Brian Pillman
- 19 Terry Taylor
- 20 Tony Garea
- 21 Magnum T.A.
- 22 Scotty Anton (Riggs)
- 23 Brian Adias
- 24 Eddie Ellner
- 25 Shane McMahon

25 Who Didn't (or Couldn't Possibly) Live Up to the Hype We Bestowed Upon Them

- 1 Lex Luger
- 2 Bill Goldberg
- 3 El Gigante
- 4 Sid Vicious
- 5 Ultimate Warrior
- 6 Tommy Rich
- 7 Wendi Richter
- 8 Bam Bam Bigelow
- 9 Dan Severn
- 10 Van Hammer
- 11 Ahmed Johnson
- 12 Sean O'Haire
- 13 Erik Watts
- 14 Public Enemy
- 15 Mike Awesome
- 16 The Eliminators
- 17 The Big Show
- 18 Zach Gowen
- 19 Madusa
- 20 Billy Jack Haynes
- 21 Mike Von Erich
- 22 911
- 23 Lance Von Erich
- 24 Buff Bagwell
- 25 Alex Wright

25 Matches That Should Be Preserved On One DVD

1 Bruno Sammartino vs. Larry Zbyszko, steel cage match (August 9, 1980). Ah, the good old days when the betrayal of a friend or protege meant so much. Bruno made his friend and protege pay quite dearly.

2 Andre the Giant vs. Killer Khan (August 24, 1981). Andre gets revenge on the Mongolian monster for deliberately breaking his ankle months earlier.

3 Bob Backlund vs. Jimmy Snuka, steel cage match (June 28, 1982). It was the night the "Superfly" came off the top of the cage with the most graceful of splashes against the WWF champ ... and missed ... and lost.

4 Roddy Piper vs. Greg Valentine (November 24, 1983). This intense Starrcade showdown saw Piper pin "The Hammer" in a bloody dog-collar chain match to win the NWA U.S. title.

5 Rick Steamboat vs. Randy Savage (March 29, 1987). So much drama, so many near-falls, 93,000-plus watching inside the Silverdome. Still arguably the greatest WrestleMania match ever.

6 Ric Flair vs. Sting (March 27, 1988). The night a young Sting became a star, by holding the NWA World champion, and maybe the greatest pro wrestler there ever was, to a 45-minute time-limit draw before a national TV audience at Clash of the Champions I.

7 Ric Flair vs. Rick Steamboat (May 7, 1989). Pick any bout between these two and you'll have picked yourself a winner. This was the one in which Flair regained the NWA World title from his toughest rival.

8 WWF Royal Rumble (January 19, 1992). Worth taking an hour-plus of your time to watch Ric Flair go the distance in the Rumble, last eliminating Sid Justice, to claim the vacant WWF World championship.

9 Brian Pillman vs. Jushin Liger (February 29, 1992). Probably the most exciting match of the short-lived and quickly forgotten WCW light heavyweight division.

10 Shawn Michaels vs. Razor Ramon (March 20, 1994). The first ladder match most of us had ever seen. Ramon retained the Intercontinental title in a WrestleMania classic that's up there with Steamboat-Savage.

11 Eddie Guerrero vs. Dean Malenko (August 26, 1995). Their final gift to the appreciative fans at the ECW Arena before departing for bigger paychecks in WCW. A technical masterpiece that ended in a draw.

12 Bret Hart vs. Steve Austin, submission match (March 23, 1997). Austin lost the WM XIII match, but he never quit (he passed out with blood streaming down his face while caught in a sharpshooter). In the process, he turned good at the same time Hart turned heel.

13 Terry Funk vs. Sabu, barbed-wire match (August 9, 1997). All but forgotten was the fact that Sabu won the ECW title. That's how brutal it was!

14 Rey Mysterio Jr. vs. Eddie Guerrero (October 26, 1997). Mysterio kept his face concealed and won the evil Guerrero's gold in this mask vs. title match. Arguably the best WCW cruiser-weight division match ever.

15 Shawn Michaels vs. Bret Hart (November 9, 1997). Gotta have the most controversial match of all-time—the Survivor Series screw job—digitally preserved, right?

16 The Undertaker vs. Mankind, "Hell In A Cell" match (June 28, 1998). The legend of Mick Foley was pretty much complete after this ghastly battle. Not even a spill off the cage roof and through a table below or a choke-slam through the same roof could get him to quit.

17 Steve Austin vs. Vince McMahon, steel cage match (February 14, 1999). After feuding for more than a year, they finally met one-on-one inside the ring at St. Valentine's Day Massacre. Vinnie Mac took his beating like a McMahon.

18 Bret Hart vs. Chris Benoit (October 4, 1999). There was no better way for them to pay tribute to Bret's brother Owen, who died five months earlier, than by having a brilliant match on *WCW Monday Nitro*.

19 Chris Benoit vs. Steven (William) Regal (May 26, 2000). An obscure classic from the 2000 Brian Pillman Memorial Card in which Regal showed the WWF he deserved another chance with the company.

20 Christian and Edge vs. The Hardy Boyz vs. The Dudley Boyz, TLC match (April 1, 2001). TLC I was terrific. The rematch was even better. Part III—held at WrestleMania X7—somehow managed to top both of them.

21 Hulk Hogan vs. The Rock (March 17, 2002). The night Hulkamania was reborn for the umpteenth time. Toronto fans didn't care that they were supposed to boo Hogan and cheer Rock. They did the opposite and loved it. The result was magic.

22 A.J. Styles vs. Jerry Lynn vs. Psicosis vs. Low-Ki (June 19, 2002). TNA showed what its X division would be all about (on the night of its very first show!) with a breathtaking four-way to determine a champion. Styles won it.

23 Kurt Angle vs. Chris Benoit (January 19, 2003). Are there any better technical wrestlers in the world today? Benoit couldn't win Angle's Smackdown title at the Royal Rumble, but the Boston crowd moved him to tears with a standing ovation anyway.

24 Kurt Angle vs. Brock Lesnar, "Ironman" match (September 16, 2003). There was never a dull second in the 60 minutes of action these two gave us on *Smackdown*. Lesnar won it, five falls to four.

25 Triple-H vs. Shawn Michaels vs. Chris Benoit (March 14, 2004). If there's ever to be a better match than this WrestleMania XX clash in 2004, we can't wait to see it. Benoit finally became the man in WWE, winning the Raw title by forcing "The Game" to tap.

25.25.25 ILLUSTRATED 25 lists of 25 items from 25 years

25 Women Who Fog Up Our Photographers' Lenses

1 Woman



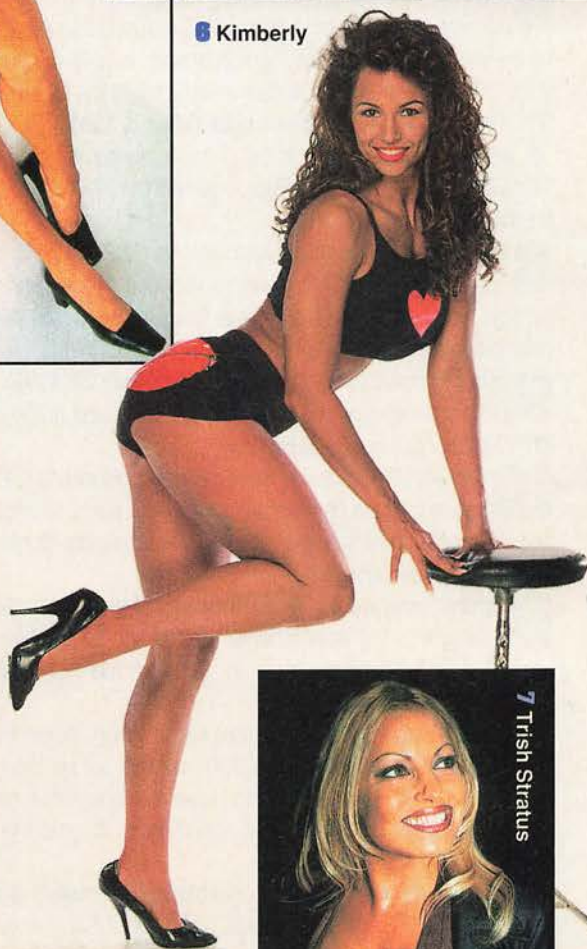
2 Stacy Keibler



3 Jeannie Clark



6 Kimberly



7 Trish Stratus



4 Beulah McGillicutty



5 Debra





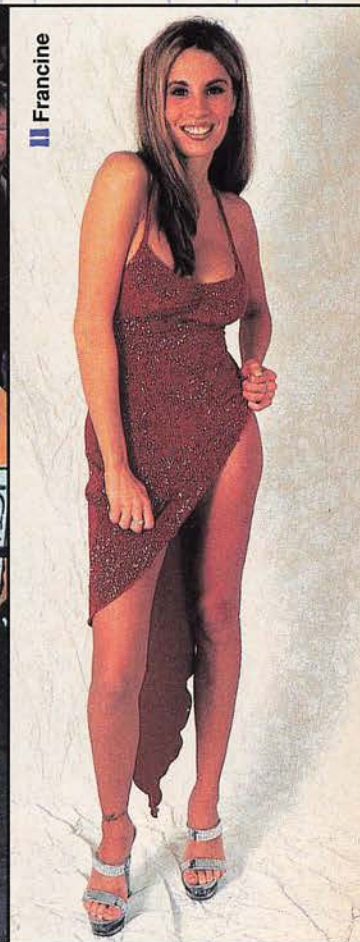
8 Toni Adams



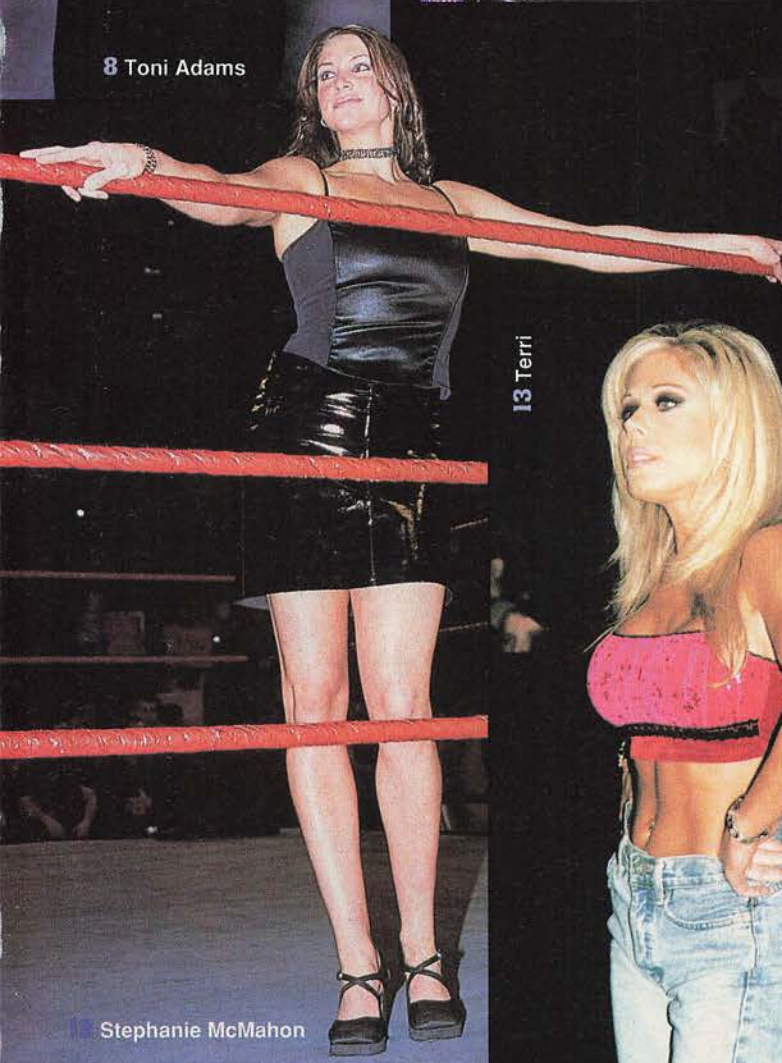
9 Lita



10 Victoria



11 Francine



12 Stephanie McMahon



13 Terri



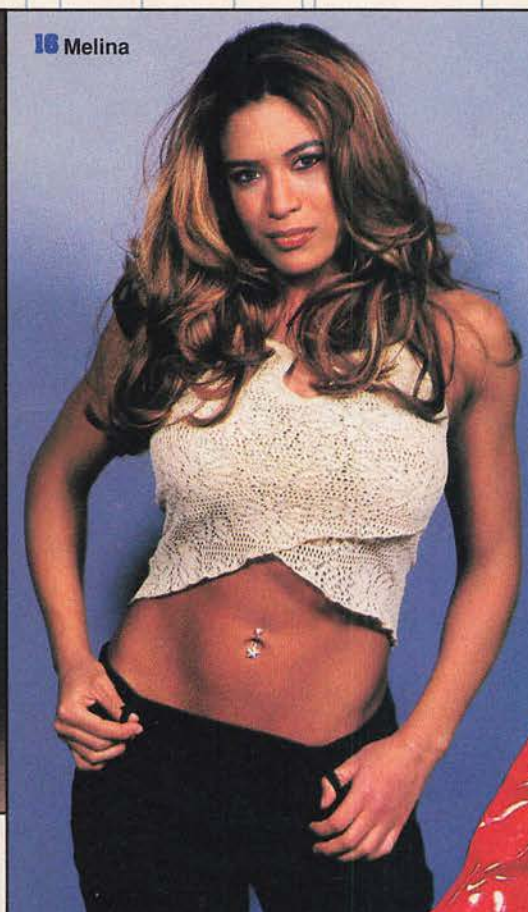
14 Missy Hyatt

25.25.25

25 lists of 25 items from 25 years



15 Madusa



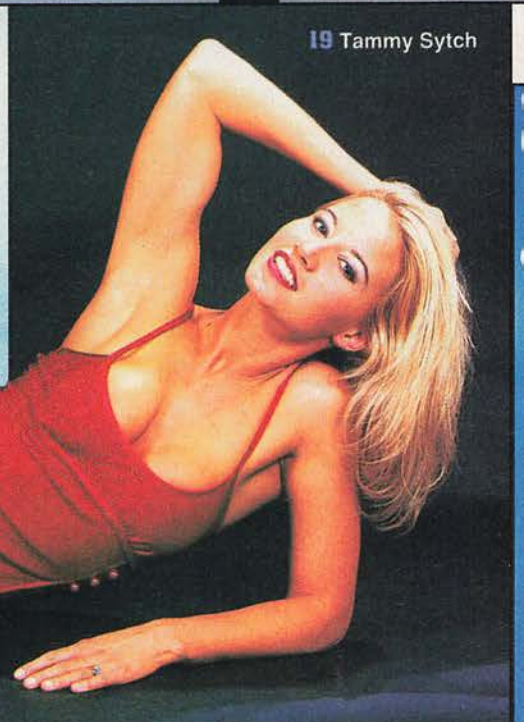
16 Melina



17 Sable



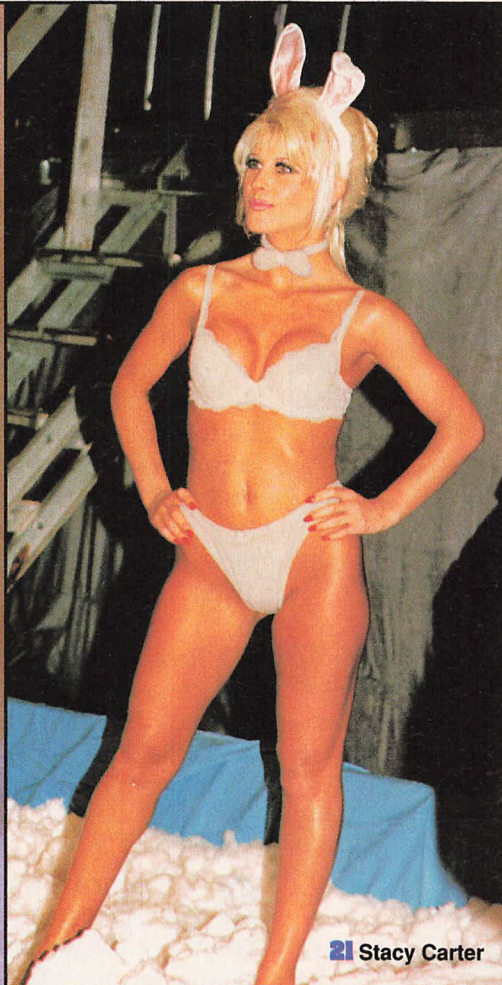
18 Dark Journey



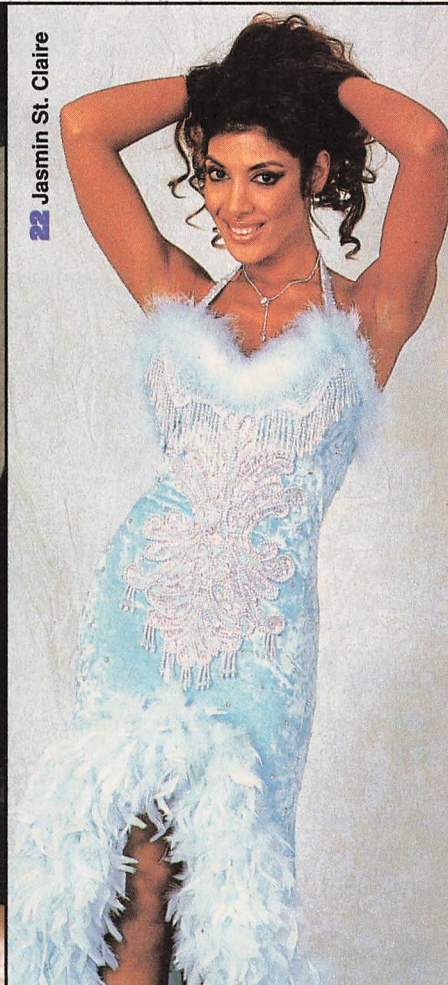
19 Tammy Sytch



20 Dawn Marie



21 Stacy Carter



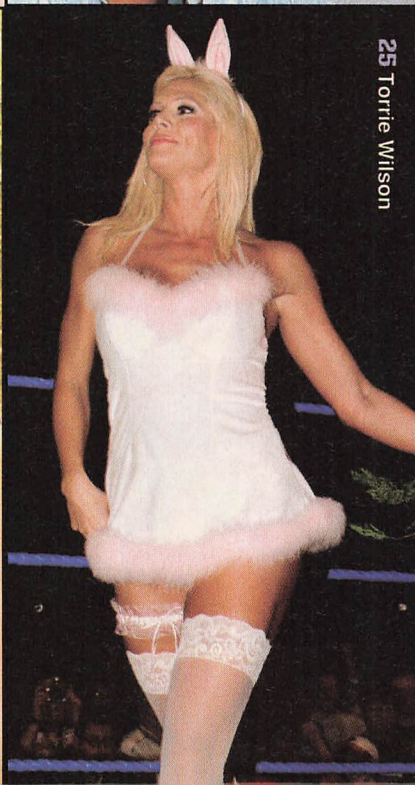
22 Jasmin St. Claire



23 Elizabeth



24 Tracy Brooks



25 Torrie Wilson

25.25.25 **25** lists of **25** items from **25** years

25 Moments We Won't Ever Forget **6**

1 Jimmy Snuka executes his "Superfly" leap from the top of a steel cage in Madison Square Garden, but his target—WWF champ Bob Backlund—rolls out of the way in the nick of time, leaves the cage, and retains the title (June 28, 1982)



2 Comedian Andy Kaufman, embroiled in a feud with Jerry Lawler in Memphis, makes headlines by getting into an obscenity-laced shouting match with "The King" while both are appearing on *Late Night With David Letterman*. He also throws coffee in Lawler's direction (July 29, 1982)

3 Hulk Hogan wins his first WWF World title and gives birth to Hulkamania by beating The Iron Sheik at Madison Square Garden (January 23, 1984)

4 Roddy Piper invites arch-enemy Jimmy Snuka to be interviewed on his "Piper's Pit" segment. Snuka shows up—only to get a coconut smashed over his head in one of the wackiest stunts ever shown on WWF TV (March 28, 1984)



5 Less than three months after his brother's death, Kerry Von Erich pins Ric Flair for the NWA World title at the David Von Erich Memorial Parade of Champions, held in front of more than 43,000 fans inside Texas Stadium (May 6, 1984)

hands of Ivan and Nikita Koloff after a cage match between Flair and Nikita in Atlanta. After the Koloffs leave, however, Ole and Arn Anderson join Flair in breaking "Big Dust's" ankle (September 29, 1985)

7 Wendi Richter sees her second and final WWF women's title reign end when she is pinned by the masked Spider Lady—then is shocked when Spider Lady reveals herself to be Richter's arch-rival, Fabulous Moolah (November 25, 1985)



8 Elizabeth strips to a teeny-weeny bikini to distract Ted DiBiase and Andre the Giant and help Randy Savage and Hulk Hogan defeat them in the main event of SummerSlam (August 29, 1988)

9 Hulk Hogan is wheeled away in a miniature wrestling ring with his arm raised in a salute to The Ultimate Warrior, a fellow fan favorite who had just beaten him cleanly for the WWF World title in the main event of WrestleMania VI (April 1, 1990)

10 In a sign of things to come, Vince McMahon turns heel for a night in the USWA when he trips his WWF broadcasting partner, Jerry Lawler, during "The King's" match with Paul Neighbors. He also insults Memphis fans and cheap-shots Lawler as Pat Patterson holds him back (August 23, 1993)

11 Shane Douglas wins a tournament to become the NWA champ, but after getting the belt, Douglas tosses it to the mat and says he doesn't want it. Douglas then proclaims himself the champion of Extreme—no longer Eastern—Championship Wrestling, starting a new era for ECW (August 27, 1994)

12 Less than 24 hours after wrestling for the WWF, Lex Luger shocks the world by showing up on the first edition of *WCW Monday Nitro* to confront World champ Hulk Hogan (September 4, 1995)

13 To keep fans at the ECW Arena entertained while the broken ring is being fixed, Paul Heyman sends out Kimona Wana-Laya, who proceeds to mesmerize the hardcore crowd with a burlesque-style towel dance (June 22, 1996)

14 Hulk Hogan betrays WCW by turning heel at Bash at the Beach and forming the NWO with Kevin Nash and Scott Hall (July 7, 1996)

15 Steve Austin gives Vince McMahon a Stone-Cold stunner for the first time, live on *Raw* at Madison Square Garden (September 21, 1997)



16 With *Raw* and *Nitro* running competing shows within driving distance of each other, DeGeneration X tries to invade the Scope Arena in Norfolk, Virginia—site of *Nitro*—to “save” old pals Scott Hall and Kevin Nash from WCW (April 6, 1998)

17 Mick Foley gets thrown off the roof of the “Hell In A Cell” cage and through a table below by The Undertaker at King of the Ring, although he somehow recovers enough to continue—but lose—the match (June 28, 1998)

18 Undefeated Bill Goldberg cleanly pins Hulk Hogan for the WCW World title on *Nitro* in front of more than 40,000 screaming fans at the Georgia Dome (July 6, 1998)

19 An emotional Ric Flair returns to WCW TV on *Nitro* after a long legal battle with the company and is greeted by a huge ovation from fans in Greenville, South Carolina (September 14, 1998)

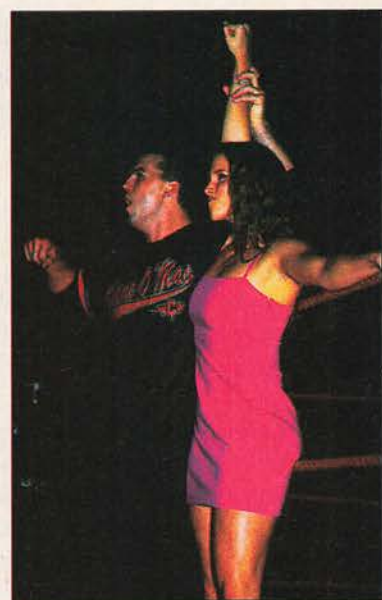
20 Most of the WWF roster gathers on the entrance ramp to observe a moment of silence at the start

of a very special edition of *Raw* to honor Owen Hart, who died the previous night during the Over the Edge pay-per-view (May 24, 1999)

21 Stacy Carter (The Kat/Miss Kitty), Jerry Lawler’s wife at the time, bares her breasts at the WWF’s Armageddon pay-per-view (December 12, 1999)

22 Paul Heyman and Stephanie McMahon merge their newly formed ECW faction with Shane McMahon’s WCW to form the Alliance, a heel group determined to destroy the WWF (July 9, 2001)

23 Just two days after the terrorist attacks on the U.S., Lilian Garcia opens a live broadcast of *Smackdown* from Houston with a beautiful, emotionally charged rendition of “The Star Spangled Banner.” Many of the WWE stars assembled on the entrance ramp shed tears as she belts out the song (September 13, 2001)



24 A Toronto crowd of more than 68,000 spontaneously turns against The Rock and supports Hulk Hogan with a deafening ovation during their WrestleMania X8 match, which Rock ultimately wins (March 17, 2002)



25 Vince McMahon introduces former WCW President Eric Bischoff—a man who once tried to put WWE out of business—as the *Raw* general manager. The two embrace (July 15, 2002)

25.25.25 ILLUSTRATED 25 lists of 25 items from 25 years

25 Moments We'd Like to Forget

1 Larry Zbyszko buys the National title for \$25,000 from Killer Brooks, who had just beaten Paul Orndorff for the championship. The slow-reacting NWA Board of Directors strips Zbyszko of the title a month later (March 20, 1983)



2 Manager Johnny Valiant derails WWF tag team champions The U.S. Express by rubbing his trademark cigar into Barry Windham's eye, temporarily blinding him. This allows Greg Valentine and Brutus Beefcake to easily win the title from Windham and Mike Rotundo (August 24, 1985)

3 Ronnie Garvin dresses as a woman—Miss Atlanta Lively—and teams with Jimmy Valiant to beat The Midnight Express in a streetfight at Starrcade (November 28, 1985)

4 Gino Hernandez throws hair remover into partner-turned-enemy Chris Adams' eyes, blinding him during a match in Fort Worth, Texas. Adams eventually regains his sight; Hernandez is found dead of a cocaine overdose eight days later (January 27, 1986)

5 MTV airs the first edition of the WWF's infamous Slammy Awards, the lowlight of which was—arguably—Vince McMahon belting out a forgettable rendition of "Stand Back" (March 1, 1986)



6 The Iron Sheik and Hack-saw Duggan—sworn enemies in the ring—are pulled over while driving erratically in a car together and arrested by New Jersey State Police. Duggan is charged with marijuana possession and drinking alcohol while driving, while Sheik is charged with possession of marijuana and cocaine. Neither does any prison time (May 26, 1987)

7 Rotund CWA manager Ronnie P. Gossett is forced

to wear a diaper and suck on a pacifier after losing a match to Jeff Jarrett (September 18, 1989)

8 "I've trained 20 years, two hours a day, to look like I do, but the thing I am not, is I'm not a steroid abuser, and I do not use steroids," WWF World champion Hulk Hogan tells talk show host Arsenio Hall. He would reveal he lied three years later at Vince McMahon's steroid distribution trial (July 16, 1991)

9 Abdullah the Butcher sustains second- and third-degree burns to his arm and chest when Abbudah Singh throws a fireball at him before their match in Woodbury, New Jersey. Much to the horror of the crowd, Abby "stops, drops, and rolls" to extinguish the flames and calmly continues the match minus a few layers of skin in some areas (September 10, 1994)

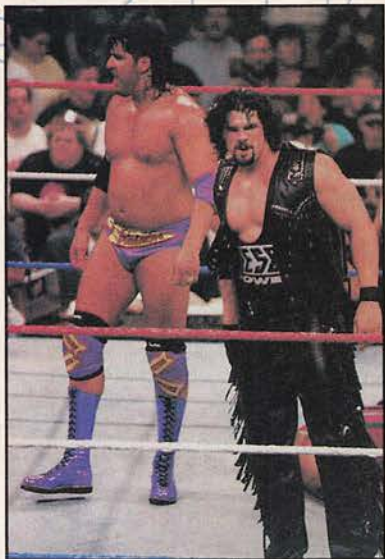


10 A barroom argument nearly turns deadly when Sid Vicious and Arn Anderson get into hotel room brawl during a WCW tour of England. Both are rushed to a hospital after Anderson receives approximately 20 stab wounds from a pair of scissors, while Vicious suffers four puncture wounds. Vicious is fired for his role in the incident (October 28, 1994)

11 Eddie Gilbert wrestles his final match in Humacao, Puerto Rico—against a bear. Gilbert is found dead of a heart attack in his Isla Verde apartment the next day (February 17, 1995)

12 Following a monster truck battle, Hulk Hogan pushes The Giant (The Big Show) off the roof of Detroit's Joe Louis Arena, only to see Giant return later in the evening unharmed to beat him by DQ in the Halloween Havoc main event (October 29, 1995)

13 Still reeling from the loss of such stars as Scott Hall and Kevin Nash to WCW, Jim Ross and the WWF introduce us all to The New Diesel and New Razor Ramon (September 23, 1996)



14 Vince McMahon double-crosses soon-to-be-WCW star Bret Hart at Survivor Series, getting referee Earl Hebner to call for the bell as soon as Shawn Michaels locks the World champ in a sharpshooter, even though Hart never submits (November 9, 1997)

15 As part of an elaborate plan to reunite the NWO, Hulk Hogan pins fellow NWO-ite Kevin Nash to win the WCW World title after an onslaught that consists of a single finger jab to the chest, infuriating nearly 40,000 fans inside the Georgia Dome and totally devaluing a once-prestigious title (January 4, 1999)



16 In a stunt gone tragically wrong, Owen Hart plunges from the rafters of Kemper Arena in Kansas City, Missouri, to his death during the WWF's Over the Edge pay-per-view (May 23, 1999)

17 Darren Drozdov is paralyzed when D-Lo Brown's attempt to execute a running power bomb on him

goes wrong at a *Smackdown* taping (October 5, 1999)

18 Scrawny actor David Arquette, teaming with Dallas Page against Eric Bischoff and Jeff Jarrett, scores the winning pinfall to capture Page's WCW World title on *WCW Thunder*. The stunt comes to symbolize the beginning of the end for the company (April 25, 2000)

19 Creative Director Vince Russo rips Hulk Hogan (in what would be his final WCW appearance) in a profane in-ring tirade at *Bash at the Beach* (July 9, 2000)

20 Sid Vicious breaks his leg in grisly fashion while jumping off a turnbuckle at the end of the main event of *WCW Sin* (January 14, 2001)

21 A smug Vince McMahon appears on a simulcast of the final *WCW Monday Nitro* (on TNT) and *WWE Raw* (on TNN) to announce he has purchased WCW (March 26, 2001)

22 Vince McMahon drops his drawers and opens his "Kiss My Ass" club on *Raw* by inducting William Regal as its first member (November 19, 2001)

23 Triple-H brings necrophilia to *Raw* during the infamous Katie Vick storyline (October 21, 2002)



24 Brock Lesnar nearly cripples himself with a botched shooting star press attempt against Kurt Angle at *WrestleMania XIX*, but recovers to win the match and the *WWE Smackdown* title (March 30, 2003)

25 John Bradshaw Layfield sparks a major controversy when he mimics Nazi soldiers by goosestepping around the ring and making pro-Hitler gestures during a *WWE* tour stop in Munich, Germany (June 5, 2004)

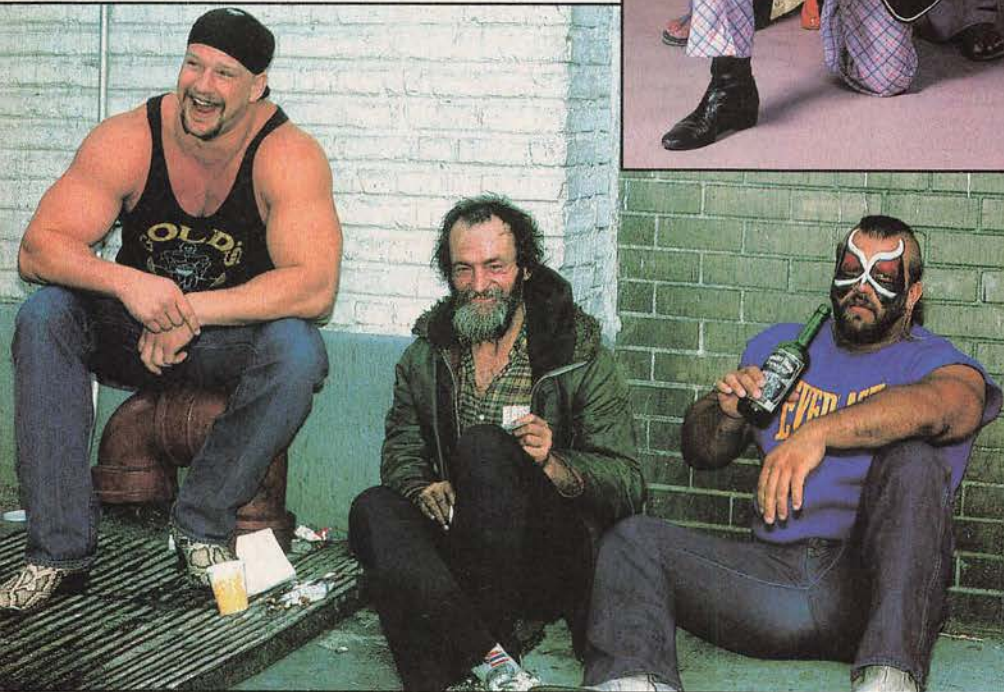
25 Memorable Photos From The *PWI* Vault

One of the staple jobs of working for *PWI* is taking part in a studio set. Just about every staff member has been involved in at least one as either a photographer, assistant, or subject. Sometimes you get a once-in-a-lifetime photo that can never be duplicated. Sometimes you get a candid shot that shows human nature at its most real. And sometimes you just wind up with bad decisions that are forever recorded on film. Here are 25 of the best that you've never seen in *PWI*:

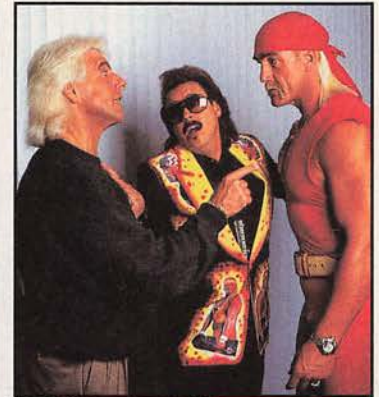
***PWI* brought together the greatest minds ...**



**and gave random strangers
a brush with celebrities.**



the biggest enemies ...



We showed you every aspect of wrestling, from extravagance ...



to anguish ...



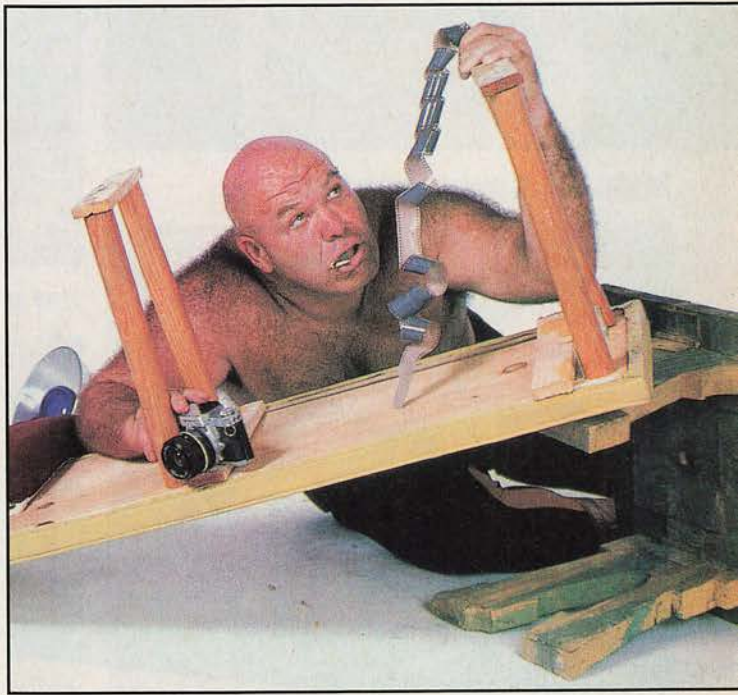
to very real issues ...



to happy memories of family.



Sometimes things didn't go as planned.



25.25.25 ILLUSTRATED 25 lists of 25 items from 25 years

Sometimes we got too close ...



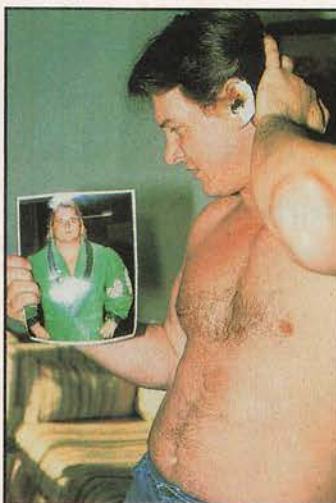
Sometimes we just didn't get close enough ...



Sometimes things got goofy ...



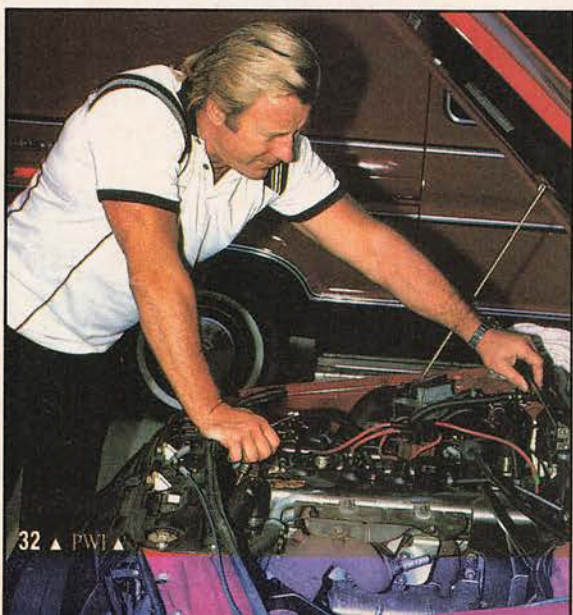
or painful ...



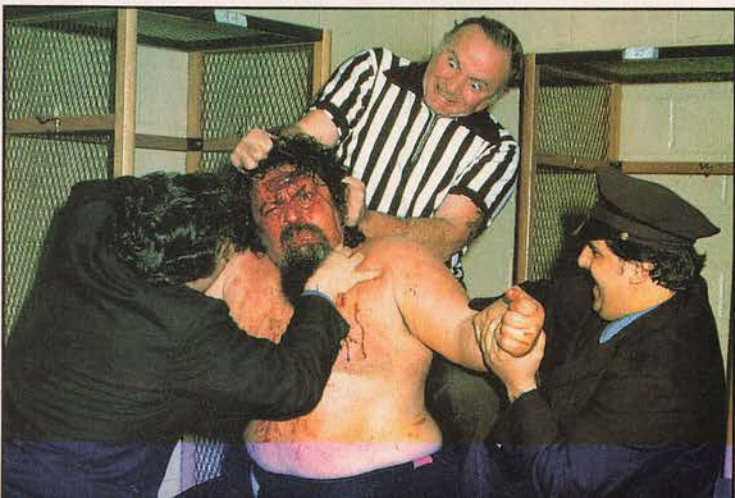
or just plain weird.



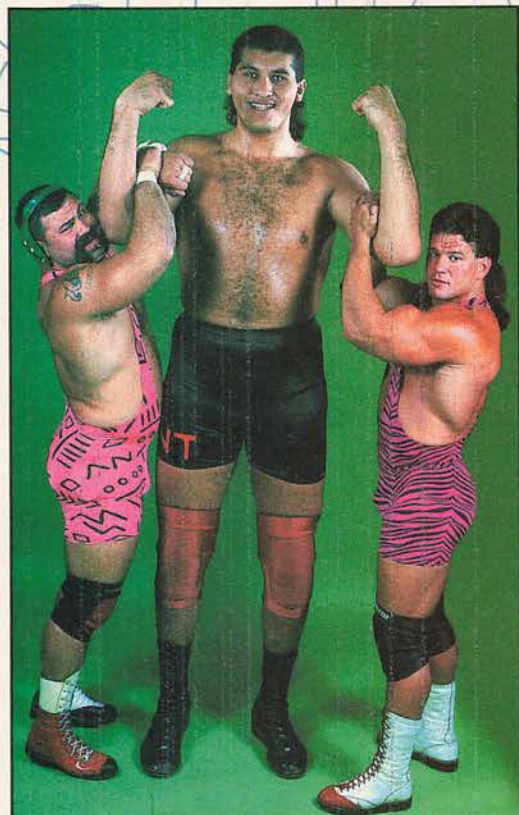
In the end, it was always fixed.



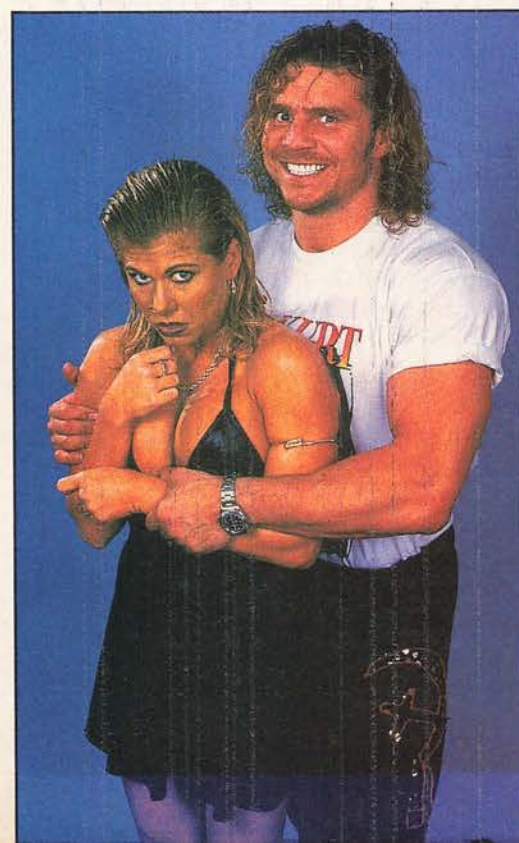
Our subjects weren't always willing ...



and as important as the helpers ...



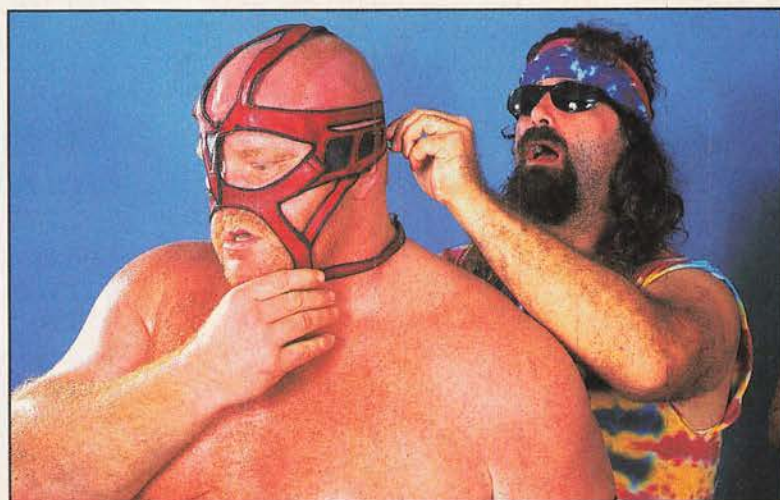
and some photos were our last time we saw that person.



And then there's Mick Foley.
He's always the lead clown ...



there to lend a helping hand ...



and he always makes life
interesting for those around him.

In the end, all we
can say is "Yay!"



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The 25 Catchiest Catchphrases

- 1 "I'm the best there is, the best there was, and the best there ever will be" (Bret Hart)
- 2 "I'm not just the coolest ... I'm not just the best ... I'm Justin Credible!" (Justin Credible)
- 3 "You're fired!" (Vince McMahon—before Donald Trump took it for his hit NBC show, *The Apprentice*)
- 4 "Who's next?!" (Bill Goldberg)
- 5 "If ya smell what The Rock is cookin'!" (The Rock)
- 6 "And that's the bottom line 'cause 'Stone-Cold' said so!" (Steve Austin)
- 7 "Holla if you hear me!" (Scott Steiner)
- 8 "What?!" (Steve Austin)
- 9 "To be the man, you have to beat the man!" (Ric Flair)
- 10 "I am your champion" (Gino Hernandez)
- 11 "Rest ... in ... peace!" (The Undertaker)
- 12 "They're literally hanging from the rafters!" (Gorilla Monsoon)
- 13 "Quote the Raven ... nevermore!" (Raven)
- 14 "D-Von ... get the tables!" (Buh Buh Ray Dudley)
- 15 "Can you dig it ... sucka!" (Booker T)
- 16 "Feel ... the ... bang!" ("Diamond" Dallas Page)
- 17 "Bang! Bang!" (Cactus Jack)
- 18 "Have a nice day!" (Mankind/Mick Foley)
- 19 "Pimpin' ain't easy!" (The Godfather)
- 20 "Whatcha gonna do when Hulkamania runs wild on you?" (Hulk Hogan)
- 21 "If I could be serious for a moment" (Lance Storm)
- 22 "Hooty-hoo!" (Master P and the No Limit Soldiers/Filthy Animals Rey Misterio Jr., Konnan, Eddie Guerrero, and Billy Kidman)
- 23 "Would you please shut the hell up!" (Chris Jericho)
- 24 "And if you're not down with that, we got two words for ya ..." (DeGeneration X)
- 25 "Funky like a monkey" (Dusty Rhodes)

25 Specialty Matches That Were Invented During The PWI Years

- 1 Hell In A Cell
- 2 Kennel From Hell
- 3 Stairway To Hell
- 4 Kiss my foot
- 5 Kiss my ass
- 6 Inferno
- 7 Arkansas hogpen
- 8 TLC
- 9 Ultimate X
- 10 Elimination Chamber
- 11 Chamber of Horrors
- 12 Boiler room brawl
- 13 [Insert object/weapon here]-on-a-pole
- 14 Royal Rumble
- 15 Gravy bowl
- 16 Stinkface
- 17 Hollywood backlot brawl
- 18 Fans-bring-the-weapons
- 19 Buried alive
- 20 Double Jeopardy
- 21 Clockwork Orange House of Fun
- 22 Spin The Wheel, Make The Deal
- 23 I Quit
- 24 Swimming pool
- 25 No-rope, explosive, barbed-wire, board, time-bomb death

25 Wrestlers Who Died Before Their Time

- 1 Eddie Gilbert, 33 (1995)
- 2 Elizabeth, 42 (2003)
- 3 Hawk, 45 (2003)
- 4 David Von Erich, 25 (1984)
- 5 Bruiser Brody, 42 (1988)
- 6 Brian Pillman, 35 (1997)
- 7 Owen Hart, 34 (1999)
- 8 Jumbo Tsuruta, 49 (2000)
- 9 Chris Adams, 46 (2001)
- 10 Terry Gordy, 40 (2001)
- 11 Andre the Giant, 46 (1993)
- 12 Curt Hennig, 44 (2003)
- 13 Adrian Adonis, 34 (1988)
- 14 Vivian Vachon, 40 (1991)
- 15 Kerry Von Erich, 33 (1993)
- 16 Big John Studd, 42 (1995)
- 17 Junkyard Dog, 45 (1998)
- 18 Rick Rude, 40 (1999)
- 19 Yokozuna, 34 (2000)
- 20 Davey Boy Smith, 39 (2002)
- 21 Jay Youngblood, 30 (1985)
- 22 Art Barr, 28 (1994)
- 23 Gino Hernandez, 29 (1986)
- 24 Buzz Sawyer, 32 (1992)
- 25 Malice, 35 (2003)

25 Differences, Then and Now

Angles mean everything	Angle means everything
Triumphant Bruno	Bitter Bruno
Blonds have more fun	Bald is beautiful
Taking legal steroids	Following strict diet/workout regimen
Superstar Graham's big muscles	Superstar Graham's new liver
Thunderlips	Thunder In Paradise
Uncle Elmer weds Joyce Staszko	Triple-H weds Stephanie
Fans love to hate Flair	Fans love to love Flair
Valiants rule the ring	Johnny Valiant rules the stage
Von Erichs	Harts
Trunks and boots	Jeans and wrestling shoes
Olympian Ken Patera	Olympian Kurt Angle
Typewriters	G5 Macintoshes
Marathon TV tapings at Hamburg Fieldhouse	Marathon tours of several countries in a week
Iron Sheik and Jimmy Snuka	Rene Dupree and Rob Van Dam
Jeff Jarrett puts a referee shirt over his head	Jeff Jarrett smashes a guitar over a ref's head
Chyna in wrestling	Wrestling in China
Sunshine	Stratus
Sika	Rosey
Fans love a five-minute headlock	Fans boo a five-minute match
Mr. Fuji's salt	Moonsaults
Rock 'n' Wrestling Connection	Rock 'n' Sock Connection
Iron claw	Mandible claw
Fifi the French maid	Fifi the French poodle
Typhoon	Hurricane

25 Moves That Were Invented During The PW/Years

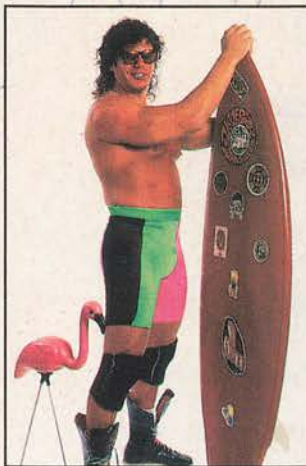
1 Sharpshooter	Riki Choshu
2 Razor's Edge	Scott Hall
3 Ace Crusher	Johnny Ace
4 Tiger Driver	Tiger Mask II (Misawa)
5 Dragon Sleeper	Tatsumi Fujinami
6 Moonsault Press	Tiger Mask I (Sayama)
7 Shooting Star Press	Jushin Liger
8 Michinoku Driver II	Taka Michinoku
9 Jackhammer	Dean Malenko
10 450 Splash	2 Cold Scorpio
11 Frog Splash	Art Barr
12 Asai Moonsault	Ultimo Dragon
13 Exploder Suplex	Jun Akiyama
14 Springboard Clothesline	Brian Pillman
15 Skytwister Press	Chapparrita Asari
16 420 Splash	2 Cold Scorpio
17 DDT	Jake Roberts
18 Gourdbuster	Arn Anderson
19 Swanton Bomb	Great Sasuke
20 Styles Clash	A.J. Styles
21 Death Valley Driver	Etsuko Mita
22 Tarantula	Yoshihiro Tajiri
23 Dragon Suplex	Tatsumi Fujinami
24 Split-Legged Moonsault	Rob Van Dam
25 920 Splash	Jack Evans

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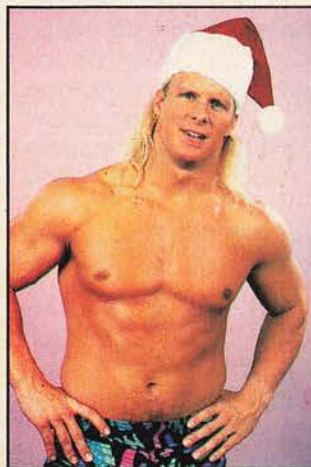
25 Marvelous Makeovers



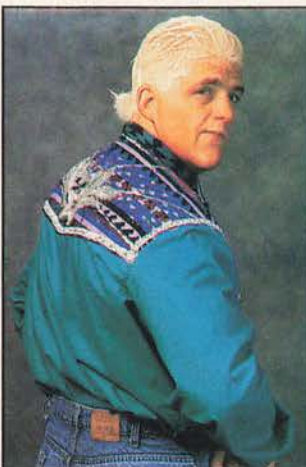
1 Adrian Adonis



2 Raven



3 Steve Austin



4 Goldust



5 Scott Steiner



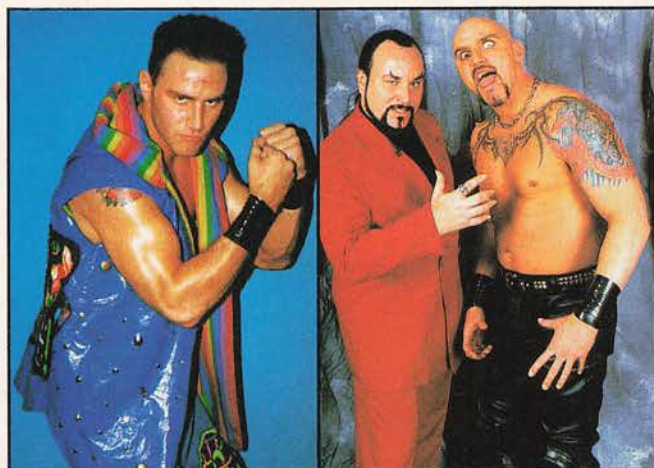
6 Tazz



7 Shane Douglas



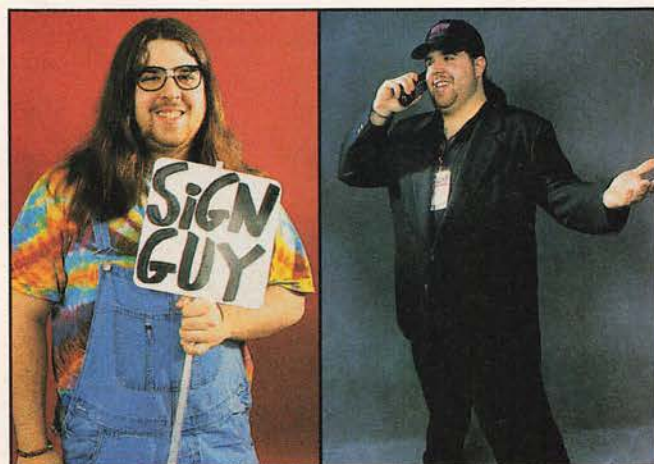
8 Blue Meanie



9 Wolfie D



10 Kevin Nash



11 Lou Dangerously



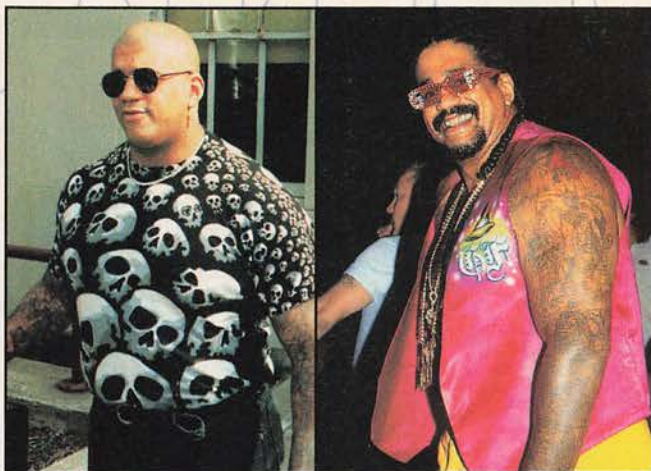
12 Sting

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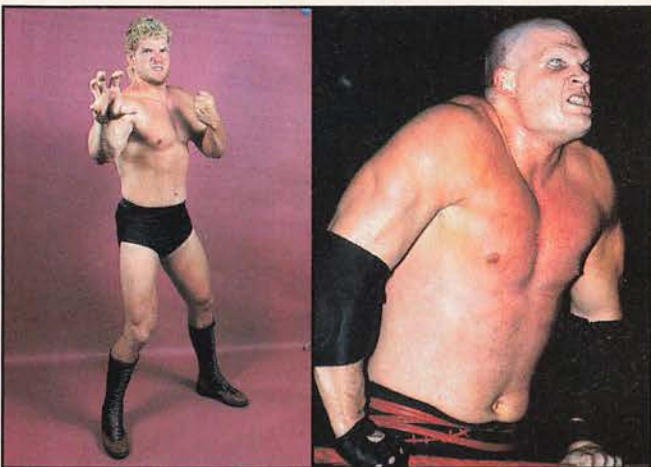
13 Hardcore Holly



14 Godfather



15 Chyna



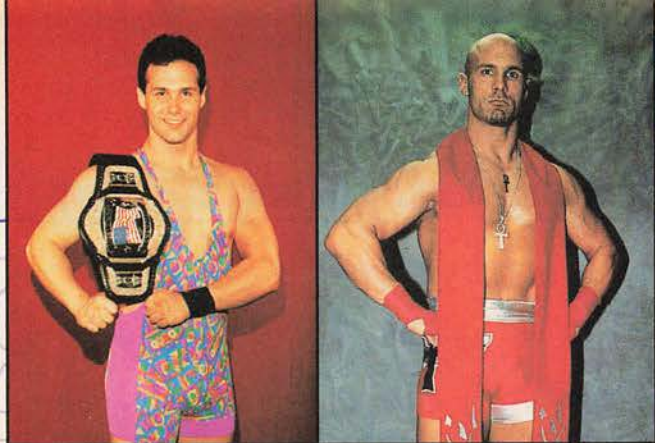
16 Kane



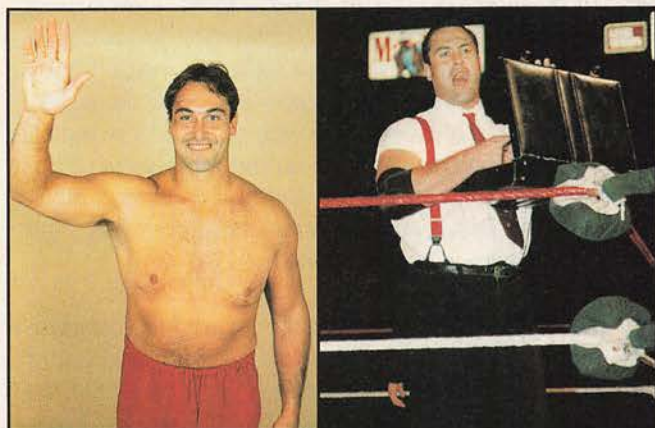
17 Keiji Muto



18 Sandman



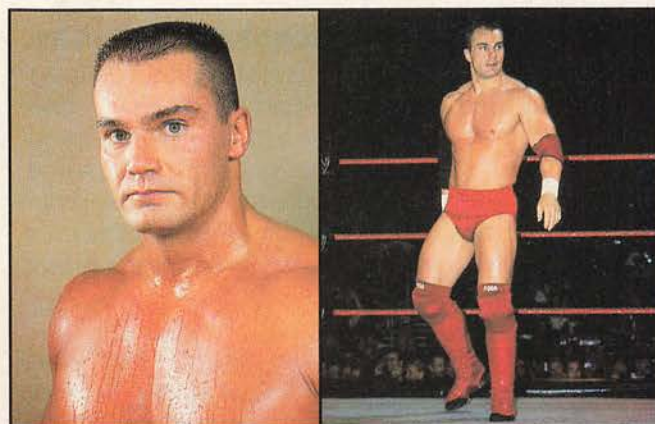
19 Chris Daniels



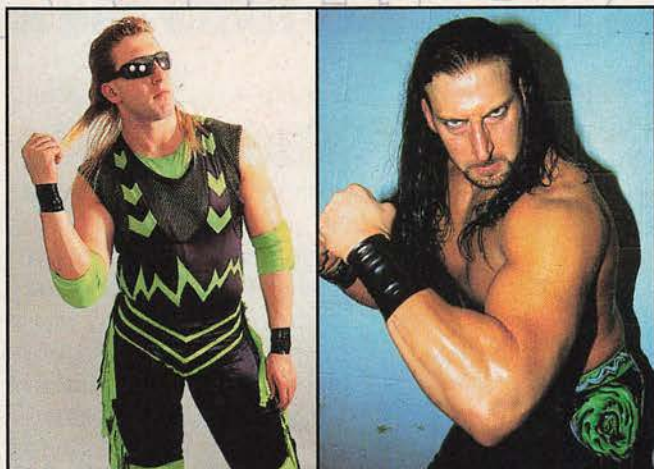
20 Mike Rotundo



22 Terri



24 Lance Storm



21 Devon Storm



23 Rikishi



25 Undertaker

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25 People Whose Influence Will Be Felt For 25 Years and Beyond

1 Vince McMahon. Would pro-wrestling even be around today without McMahon? That question is more reasonable than it first appears. After all, it was McMahon who changed the fans' perceptions of wrestling, coining the term sports entertainment. McMahon pioneered the concept of the pay-per-view spectacular and made a fortune selling merchandise. He also destroyed the old territory system, consolidating many of the best (and most marketable) stars from every region under the WWE umbrella.



Loved, hated, respected, and feared, McMahon singlehandedly ushered pro wrestling into the modern WrestleMania era.

2 Hulk Hogan. As brilliant a promoter as McMahon was, he couldn't have succeeded on his own. Hulk Hogan was McMahon's marquee player during the national expansion period of the mid-1980s. Though he was never a technical master, Hogan was one of the most charismatic performers ever to set foot in the ring. He urged kids to say their prayers, take their vitamins, and listen to Mom and Dad. Hogan transitioned his character to the silver screen in several movies, always building on his enormous fan base. And when it seemed like his act had grown stale, Hogan re-created himself as a villain in the NWO—and then again as a superhero in WWE in 2002.

3 Eric Bischoff. Bischoff had the moxie to challenge Vince McMahon's WWF for supremacy ... and he very nearly succeeded. Bischoff took the reigns of WCW in 1994 and immediately set out to steal McMahon's top stars away from him. It was poetic justice; McMahon was facing the same tactics that he had successfully used against dozens of regional promoters—and losing. By having the vision to showcase international cruiserweights and creating the NWO, Bischoff made *Monday Nitro* must-see TV. WCW surpassed the WWF as wrestling's dominant company in America from 1996 to 1998, before the company collapsed under the weight of poor writing, complacent talent, and massive guaranteed contracts.

4 Ric Flair. The "Nature Boy" was the ying to the "Hulkster's" yang. The consummate technical wrestler, Flair dominated the NWA World title picture from 1981 to 1991. Unlike Hogan, Flair usually had to cheat to get an upper hand. Despite those tactics, Flair became a cult favorite with fans. In addition to his unsurpassed wrestling and interview skills, perhaps Flair's greatest talent was making his opponents look like superstars. Regardless of whom Flair was facing, every match was an epic struggle, with fans pulling for whoever happened to be Flair's opponent. From his "stylin' and profilin'" interviews to his trademark chops and figure-four, Flair is universally acknowledged as *the* man.

5 Jim Crockett. Vince McMahon wasn't the only promoter working to merge regional territories under one unified company. Jim Crockett Jr. (pictured with Stan Hansen) had tremendous success with Mid-Atlantic Championship Wrestling, using top names like Ric Flair, Harley Race, and others. From 1985 to 1987, Crockett unified Mid-Atlantic with regional territories in Georgia, St. Louis, Central States, Florida, and the UWF under the banner of the NWA. Crockett promoted some of the sport's first supercards, from the Crockett Cup Memorial Tag Team Tournament to the first Starrcade. While McMahon promoted glitz and glamour, Crockett always reminded us that the marquee outside read "wrestling."



6 Linda, Shane, and Stephanie McMahon. Behind every great man is a great woman, and that's certainly the case with Vince McMahon. CEO Linda's business acumen helped Vince transform WWE into a publicly traded, billion-dollar corporation. Shane and Stephanie have also proved to be invaluable players, both behind the scenes and in the ring. Vince McMahon's empire is in good hands, and the family business will stay just that for many years to come.

7 Paul Heyman. The year was 1993. The WWF was featuring wrestling clowns, race car drivers, dentists, hillbillies, pirates, and more. But Heyman had a new vision for wrestling: Forget about courting the favor of little kids

and get back to the raw violence and mayhem of yesterday. Heyman transformed the Philadelphia-based Eastern Championship Wrestling into the revolutionary *Extreme Championship Wrestling*. His unique blend of adult-oriented storylines, hardcore brawls, aerial daredevils, and beautiful women forced other promotions, including the WWF, to change the way they presented their products.

8 Antonio Inoki. No one man has done more to mold the look and feel of pro wrestling in Japan than Antonio Inoki. Best known for his infamous 15-round draw against Muhammad Ali in a 1976 wrestler vs. boxer battle,



Inoki was a firm believer in presenting wrestling as legitimate fighting competition. Besides Ali, Inoki also fought an Olympic gold medalist in judo and a world karate champion. Ambitious to a fault, Inoki broke away from Rikidozan's JWA to form New Japan Pro Wrestling. After

retiring from the ring, he started the Universal Fighting-Arts Organization to keep his vision of "fighting spirit" in wrestling alive.

9 Steve Austin. "Stone-Cold" was about as different from Hulk Hogan as humanly possible, but he somehow surpassed Hogan in popularity and merchandise sales. Austin was the ultimate rebel/anti-hero. He wrestled like a heel, but was wildly cheered by fans. Even when he hit his Stone-Cold stunner on beloved figures like Mick Foley and The Rock (and even Santa Claus, for Pete's sake!), fans cheered their lungs out. Austin changed the traditional psychology of wrestling and made it cool for fans to root for the bad guys.

10 Shohei "Giant" Baba. Shohei Baba was more than the Japanese equivalent of Andre the Giant—he was an influential promoter and ambassador for *puroresu*. Baba founded All-Japan Pro Wrestling, which battled Antonio Inoki's New Japan for dominance for three decades. Baba forged strong ties between AJPW and the NWA and won the NWA World title on three occasions. He acted as a mentor to dozens of wrestlers and was one of the most beloved figures in *puroresu*, as well as one of the biggest draws.

11 Dusty Rhodes. This "son of a plumber" rode his blue-collar sensibilities to three NWA World titles. Even in his prime, "The American Dream" hardly looked like a pro athlete. You could question his physical conditioning, but you could never question Rhodes' heart. He battled the biggest and best in the sport, and usually came out on top. He struck a chord with fans (still does!) because he never tried to be anything more than what he truly was: a good ol' boy from Texas fightin' for what he believed in. Rhodes was also one of wrestling's best interviews. As a promoter, Rhodes loved nothing more than teasing a title change, only to put the title back around the champion's waist—a tactic insiders refer to as "a Dusty finish."



12 The Rock. It's hard to believe The Rock has been wrestling only eight years. "The most electrifying man in sports entertainment" has done a remarkable job of selling wrestling to mainstream fans. Not only did he become the most popular wrestler in WWE, he raised the bar on the art of cutting a promo. His ability to think on his feet and hold the fans' rapt attention is truly incredible. When he landed a bit part in *The Mummy*, Rock showed true potential as Hollywood's next breakout action star. He continued to win fans and show mainstream audiences that pro wrestlers weren't just grunting behemoths with IQs matching the size of their biceps. No offense to Lex Luger, but The Rock is wrestling's true total package, even if he now spends most of his time in Hollywood.



13 Ted Turner. If there's one man who can match (or surpass) Vince McMahon when it comes to arrogance and power, it's Ted Turner. The man who turned a Georgia cable-TV station into a national superstation wasn't about to let McMahon hog all the glory that came with running a successful wrestling organization. A

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lifelong rasslin' fan with the deepest pockets imaginable, Turner purchased NWA cornerstone Jim Crockett Promotions in 1988 (renaming it WCW) and poured money into his new toy, eventually allowing executives to outbid the WWF for top stars. Even when WCW was hemorrhaging money, Turner kept spending, saying he made enough from other ventures to absorb the losses. Turner's dedication kept WCW going in its darkest days, and briefly let it surpass the WWF in terms of profit and popularity.

14 Keiji Muto. There are plenty of reasons why Muto is one of the most influential wrestlers of the past 25 years, but just one matters: He was the first wrestler to popularize the moonsault in the United States, doing so in the NWA in the late-1980s. Muto was also a very successful wrestler both in the U.S. and Japan, despite his inability to speak English fluently. He became one of the top stars of New Japan and helped develop relations with WCW in the 1990s. But in 2002, Muto jumped from NJPW and became president of All-Japan, taking the reins from Shohei Baba's widow, Motoko. Muto has been a versatile performer on both sides of the Pacific.

15 Mick Foley. If Foley had his way, he'd be remembered as the big, ugly lug who gritted his way to three WWF World titles through sheer determination and a touch of humor. He'd want to be remembered as a



great performer, a talented writer, and an ambassador for wrestling—all of which he is. But Mrs. Foley's little boy is also known as the most successful backyard wrestler of all-time. He will forever be remembered for that amateur videotape of him jumping off a roof during a "match" in his youth. Foley is the inspiration for countless wrestlers who put their bodies on the line

and absorb superhuman punishment to try to make it in wrestling. But what set Foley apart was that he was an expert storyteller, an intelligent individual, and a blue-collar guy who made his impossible dream come true.

16 Roddy Piper. Taking fifth place in an international bagpipe-playing competition isn't exactly a first-class ticket to the top of the wrestling world, but it was all 15-year-old Roddy Piper had going for him. Piper wasn't a big man. He wasn't a technical wrestling master. But he

had a knack for infuriating fans like no other by insisting on playing his pipes before every match. Piper was a master wrestling psychologist, perhaps the greatest villain in wrestling history. Would Hulk Hogan have ever become as popular as he was in the WWF in the mid-1980s without such a first-rate nemesis?

17 Jerry Lawler. The 27-time USWA champion has a legitimate claim to being the true "King" of wrestling. Well, Memphis wrestling at least, as both promoter and wrestler. Lawler resisted the offers to leave his hometown and compete in other territories. Instead, he welcomed the biggest names in the sport to Memphis, where he beat them in front of his loving fans. Even while headquartered in Memphis, Lawler made national headlines in 1982 when he got into it with comedian Andy Kaufman on David Letterman's show. Like Dusty Rhodes, Lawler won over fans by simply being himself and letting his natural charisma shine through. Eventually, he landed an announcing gig with WWE.

18 Vince Russo. The sultan of the swerve was a firm believer in Crash TV, whether that meant having Scott Hall and Kevin Nash wrestle two scantily clad strippers in a TV main event, or putting the WCW World title around David Arquette's scrawny waist. Vince Russo helped Vince McMahon overcome WCW in the ratings war with his risque storylines and unorthodox match-making ideas. Russo was also the first backstage writer who eclipsed in-ring performers. His defection from the WWF to WCW was supposed to swing the balance of power back to WCW, but Russo never performed as well without McMahon exercising creative control on his ideas.



19 Capt. Lou Albano. The Captain was one of the focal points of "The Rock 'n' Wrestling Connection," which spawned WrestleMania and introduced a generation of music video fans to wrestling. Albano befriended Cyndi Lauper and appeared in several of her music videos. With his trademark rubber bands dangling from his face, his mile-a-minute, off-the-cuff interviews, and colorful clothes, he became a highly visible ambassador for wrestling. Albano's promo skills have been emu-

lated by everyone from Dusty Rhodes to boxing impresario Don King.

20 Bret Hart. "The best there is, the best there was, and the best there ever will be." That little phrase was more than a marketing tagline—it was Bret Hart's personal mission statement. "I think I was the guy that made wrestling real again," Hart said in an exclusive interview published in the May 2004 issue of *The Wrestler*. "I wasn't 6'8" ... I didn't have 30-inch arms ... All I had was my wrestling ability." That wrestling ability was enough to make Hart one of the sport's most admired competitors. He proved that a good little man



could beat a good big man. His falling-out with Vince McMahon during the height of the WCW-WWF war was immortalized in the documentary *Wrestling With Shadows*. Today, Bret is seen by many as the conscience of wrestling, and one of the chief influences of Raw champ Chris Benoit.

21 Jim Ross. "Eric [Bischoff's] take on [Jim] Ross was that he was fat and he was Southern, and didn't play well to mainstream U.S.A. Well, Jim Ross is still fat and he's still Southern, but he's also the best announcer who's ever called a match, and he's a big reason *Raw* is the hottest show in the country." So wrote Mick Foley in *Have A Nice Day*, and his words still ring true today. Ross' passion for wrestling comes through every time he speaks. Strong commentary can add to the drama and entertainment of a match. Ross calls matches intelligently and does his research. He has become the gold standard in play-by-play commentating. He's also had a lot to do with WWE's success in recent years, as he served as head of talent relations for the company.

22 The Undertaker. When Mark Callaway made his WWF debut in 1990, no one could have predicted the incredible success "The Dead Man" would have. Four World titles. A WrestleMania record of 11-0. Wins over everyone from Hulk Hogan to The Rock, and Triple-H to Brock Lesnar. Not bad for a guy most people thought was a one-dimensional brawler. 'Taker constantly reinvented himself over the past 15 years and remains as relevant today as he was in 1990. He also became WWE's locker room leader, the man who has been able

to reign in some of the sport's biggest egos.

23 Jerry Jarrett. Best known today as Jeff Jarrett's father, Jerry headed Memphis' Mid-Southern Wrestling, the CWA, and the USWA. He was one of the last of the regional promoters, offering the Memphis faithful a homegrown alternative to WCW and the WWF. But Jarrett's most ambitious endeavor took place in 2002, when he and Jeff launched TNA. Jarrett had the audacity to build a business model based on weekly pay-per-view events. The critics scoffed, but Jarrett persevered, building a solid promotion around veteran competitors and the thrilling X division. This summer, TNA became the first non-WWE promotion with a national cable-TV presence since the demise of WCW in 2001.

24 The Road Warriors. With their fearsome face paint, Herculean physiques, and imposing spiked shoulder pads, Hawk and Animal were perhaps the most intimidating duo to stride down an aisle. The Road Warriors redefined the art of tag team wrestling. Their matches were to traditional tag matches as music videos were to sitcoms, with the Roadies taking almost all the offense. Even though the two men were initially promoted as heels, fans were quickly caught up in the excitement surrounding Hawk and Animal. The Warriors' dominance transcended promotional boundaries, as they were the only team ever to win the NWA, AWA, and WWF world tag titles.



25 Sting. At a time when most of WCW's top stars were jumping ship, the man called Sting remained loyal and became one of the most popular and dependable stars in wrestling. Starting with his epic 45-minute draw against Ric Flair on the first Clash of the Champions in 1988, Sting became the promotion's franchise player. He resisted several lucrative offers from the WWF and injected a much-needed dose of excitement into a promotion badly in need of stars. When former WWF competitors like Hulk Hogan, Randy Savage, Scott Hall, and Kevin Nash invaded WCW, Sting updated his look and persona to remain one of the company's top fan favorites.

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25 People Who Enjoyed 15 Minutes of Wrestling Fame (or less)

1 Herb Abrams. Little guy with a big mouth and plans too ambitious for his bank account. The promoter that couldn't will always have a pay-per-view listed in the *PWI Almanac* (Beach Brawl, June 9, 1991), but that's about it. He died of a heart attack in 1996 at age 41.

2 Paul Alperstein. Another businessman/wrestling fan who yearned to hit the big time, Alperstein had a deep-pocketed investor in BKS/Bates Entertainment and garnered a syndication package for his AWF that covered 80 percent of the country in 1996.

The show lasted all of 12 weeks.

3 David Arquette. If Vince Russo had to make an actor WCW World champ, couldn't he have used some of AOL Time Warner's considerable money to attract someone from at least Hollywood's "B" list? And preferably one with a physique.

4 Blitzkrieg. Terrific masked high-flyer who wowed WCW crowds during the cruiserweight division's heyday of the late-1990s. Who knows, maybe it was him playing El Gran Luchadore one of those times on *Smackdown*.

5 B(arbara) B(lush). Busty blonde EMT who quickly transformed herself into a WWF diva. Can always boast that she was part of the only four-way evening gown match held inside a swimming pool in the history of the company (Armageddon 1999). She was history soon thereafter.

6 Cloudy. Brought into the WWF as a foil for Tammy "Sunny" Sytch. Long-range forecast for him/her/whatever wasn't good.

7 Steve Constant. Weightlifter in the front row taunts Superstar Graham at a 1984 show in Memphis, then strips off his shirt, and attacks Graham in the ring. What he gets is a full-nelson, a hospital stay, and an embarrassing "Dressing Room Confidential" column in which he admits he's lucky to be alive.

8 Tyler Fullington. Remember The Sandman's son, the disturbed little punk who joined Mommy in betraying Daddy and falling under Raven's spell in ECW? Wonder if the kid has any issues to work out today.



9 Kevin Greene. Too bad this NFL star didn't devote himself to wrestling full-time after retiring. He showed a lot of promise and enthusiasm. It was Greene whom ex-NFL star Steve McMichael betrayed in joining The Four Horsemen in 1996.

10 Tonya Harding. Bad girl figure skater made but one (one too many) much-hyped appearance in the sport—as a manager on an independent show. Nancy Kerrigan was nowhere to be found.

11 Big Bad John. Stood 7'7" and that was about the extent of his physical prowess. Another "next Andre" who came up, well, short.

12 Andy Kaufman. Eccentric actor/comedian worked Memphis wrestling fans into a frenzy during his feud with Jerry Lawler and even landed them a controversial appearance on Letterman in 1982.



13 Master P and his No Limit Soldiers. Eric Bischoff thought the rap mogul would have great crossover appeal to fans of WCW wrestling. What a load of hooty-hooley! These guys were gone within months. It wasn't soon enough.

14 Jack Petrik. When Ted Turner bought Jim Crockett Promotions in 1988, Petrik drew the short straw among TBS execs and was given charge of the company. He quickly turned over control to Jim Herd and was never heard from again.

15 Ralphus. Chris Jericho's plump sidekick in WCW loved wearing T-shirts that were far too small to cover his ever-expanding gut. Somehow Y2J made the act work.

16 Cheryl Roberts. Another wife dragged into her wrestler husband's business. In her case, hubby Jake objected to Rick Rude airbrushing her image on his tights. Yeah, that wasn't cool.



17 David Sammartino. Predictably started his career amid much fanfare, but he wasn't big enough, he didn't much care for the sport, and he lost whatever pull he might have had when he and Papa had a falling-out.

18 Otis Sistrunk. The 6'4", 270-pound former Oakland Raider had everything to make it big in this business—except ability. He and Michael Hayes did win the NWA National tag team title from Terry Gordy and Jimmy Snuka in 1981, but he quit right afterward.

19 Lisa Sliwa. Then the wife of Guardian Angels leader Curtis Sliwa, Lisa was so serious about a career in wrestling that she came to our New York of-



fices for a lengthy photo shoot. The one-time model never stepped foot in a ring, though. She finally divorced Curtis and is now Fox News reporter Lisa Evers.

20 Bonnie Steamboat. Helped solidify husband Rick's image as a wholesome family man whenever needed in the NWA back in the 1980s. Good thing Russo wasn't around. He would have had her turn against Rick and had little Ricky hit him with Ric Flair's brass knuckles in a truly memorable swerve.

21 John "Coach" Tolos. Tolos is a Hall of Fame candidate who was great on the mike in the '70s and should have been a great manager. Unfortunately, by the time he got to the WWF in 1990 to "coach" Curt Hennig and Bob Orton Jr., he just didn't have it anymore.



22 Al Wilson. He really was/is Torrie Wilson's papa and made the mistake of hanging around at a few WWE TV tapings. Dawn Marie seduced him and married him, then was a little too much diva for him on the honeymoon. His death on TV didn't stop him from attending Torrie's real wedding to Billy Kidman months later. *Huh?*

23 Jim Wilson. Another footballer-turned-grappler, Wilson was bitter about the way he thought he and others were mistreated by wrestling and went about trying to expose the business' dark side, most prominently along with Eddie Mansfield on *20/20* in 1985, and then with a book, *Chokehold*, last year.

24 David Wolff. If enduring Cyndi Lauper's presence in a wrestling ring wasn't enough, the sight of her skinny, stringy-haired manager made you wish the term "Rock 'n' Wrestling Connection" had never been coined. Thankfully, when she was gone, so was he.

25 Zeus. Made for an interesting adversary for Hulk Hogan in the movie *No Holds Barred*. And a lousy one in WWF rings. How bad was he? He brought up the rear of the first "PWI 500" in 1991, back when it was a struggle to fill out the list.

25.25.25 ILLUSTRATED 25 lists of 25 items from 25 years

25 Mmmm ... Yeahs



1 Lanny Poffo

Looks like his rhyming is a little rusty



2 Adrian Street with Miss Linda

Fabulous when the Fab 5 were in pink diapers



Doink & Dink

Can't sleep or the clowns will eat me



4 Japanese Pool Boy

Wonder what happens when he clicks his heels



Miss Atlanta Lively

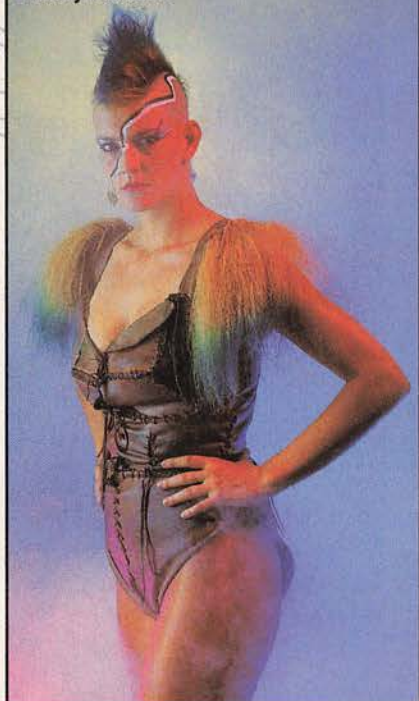
She packed quite a punch!



6 Christopher Love

We don't want to know what's under your fancy bathrobe

7 Lady Maxxine



Lookin' like a scared porcupine

Lord Zoltan



Lord of what?

8 Sal Bellomo



Thankfully using defenseless stuffed animals as head camouflage

10 Arachnaman



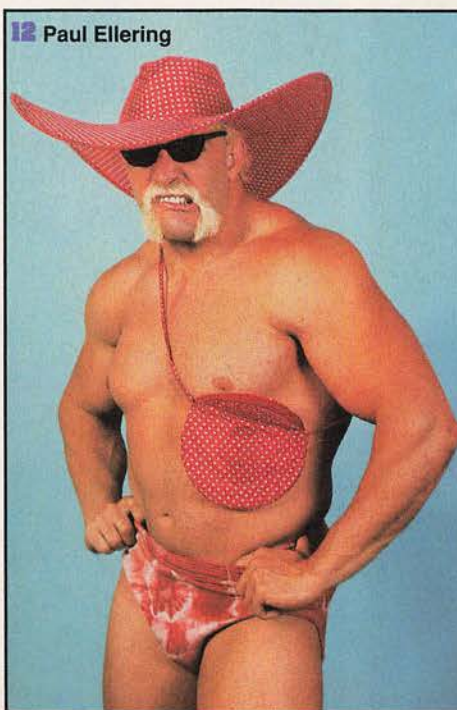
Spidey he's not

11 Chicken Neck



He weighed in at \$2.49 per pound. Now that's cheap!

12 Paul Ellering



Who knew Wall Street was in the gayborhood?

13 Christopher Street Connection

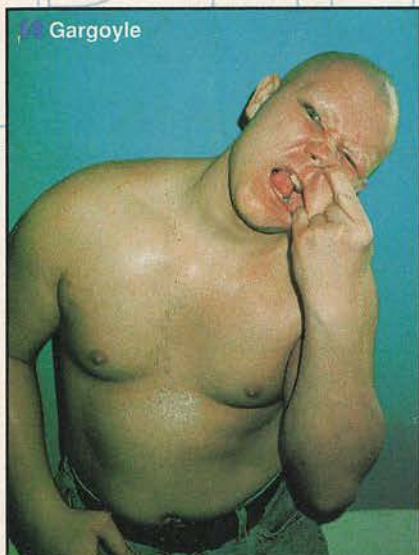


At least they aren't kissing in this photo

25.25.25

25 lists of 25 items from 25 years

14 Gargoyle



The pick of the litter

15 Gobbledygooker



Don't get too close, Howard!

16 Grizzly Boone



Don't get downwind of him

17 Greg "Rambo" Gagne



Couldn't even scare a Girl Scout

18 Gillberg



Who's next? Not him!

19 Jimmy Valiant



The quintessential flake

20 Curly Moe



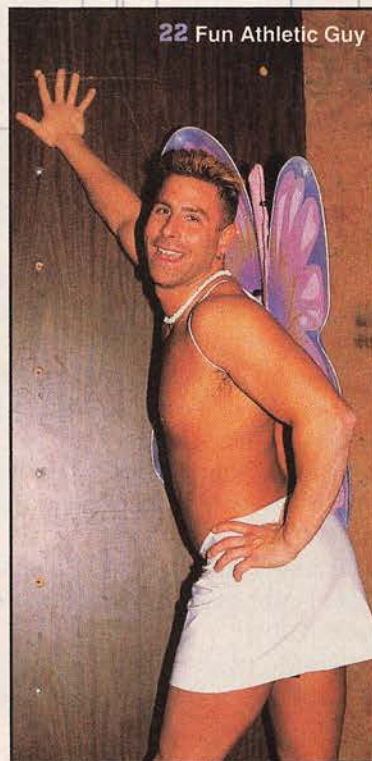
Did he eat Shemp and Larry?

21 Blackhearts



Just plain creepy

22 Fun Athletic Guy



Nice butterfly wings

23 Jim Cornette



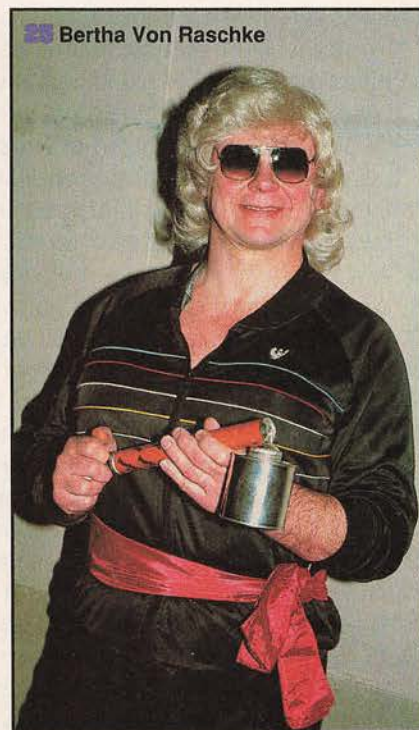
No wonder the South lost

24 Lazor-Tron



The Spanish word for "Lost Guerrero"

25 Bertha Von Raschke



The sexiest babe in the AWA!

25.25.25 25 lists of 25 items from 25 years

25 Headlines That Were Rejected After Less Than 25 Minutes of Discussion

- 1 "Blood, Debt, And Tears: ECW Takes Past-Due Notices To The Extreme!" (2000)
- 2 "Bob Backlund's Stunning Confession: 'I'm A Playa. I'm A Pimp'" (1981)
- 3 "Samoans Shocker: Afa To Sika New Partner!" (1983)
- 4 "To Be The Man, You Have To Eat The Man: Abdullah The Butcher's Plan To Dethrone Ric Flair" (1988)
- 5 "Dakota Runnels' Emotional Plea: 'Daddy, Stop Wearing Mommy's Clothes!'" (1997)
- 6 "What?! What?! What?! The Truth Behind Steve Austin's Hearing Problem" (2001)
- 7 "Triple-H And Triple-D: The McMahon/Helmsley Era Kicks Into High Gear" (2001)
- 8 "Grateful Dead: Why Al Wilson Should Be Thankful He Doesn't Have To See Torrie vs. Dawn" (2002)
- 9 "Rob Van Dam Smokes The Competition: Isn't It High Time He Got A Shot At The ECW World Title?" (1999)
- 10 "Sgt. Slaughter: Traitorous Sack Of Shiite" (1991)
- 11 "Wrestling Fans Demand: 'We Want More Necrophilia!'" (2003)
- 12 "Kerry Von Erich Commits Suicide: Another Von Bites The Dust" (1993)
- 13 "The PWI 5,000,000" (2003)
- 14 "Nine Out Of 10 Children Agree: Killer Brooks Makes Us Cry" (1984)
- 15 "Eric Embry's Top Secret Workout Tips" (1989)
- 16 "Why Bradshaw Will One Day Be World Champion" (2001)
- 17 "R.I.P., Hawk: Sadly, Not A Story About Swede Hanson's Old Tag Team Partner" (2003)
- 18 "Dusty Rhodes' Theory Of Nuclear Fission, Part III" (1983)
- 19 "Watts Wrong With WCW" (1993)
- 20 "Fantasy Warfare: The Killer Bees vs. The YJStinger Bees" (2003)
- 21 "PWI Exclusive: Roddy Piper Talks About Seat Belts, Peanut Butter, Shoelaces, And Whatever Else Pops Into His Head" (2003)
- 22 "There Were Eight Million Fans And Andre Weighed 3,000 Pounds! Hulk Hogan Remembers WrestleMania III" (2004)
- 23 "Words Of Wisdom From The Ultimate Warrior: A Two-Paragraph Report" (1998)
- 24 "Now Is The Time! Why WCW Must Expand Nitro To Six Hours" (1998)
- 25 "Bret Screwed Bret! The 'Hitman' Finally Reveals: 'I'm Double-Jointed'" (2000)

25 Dan Shocket Signature Lines

- 1 "It was a magnificent exhibition of wrestling brilliance."
- 2 "It was a ruthless exhibition of wrestling ferocity."
- 3 "It was a brilliant exhibition of wrestling skill."
- 4 "It was an honorable exhibition of wrestling integrity."
- 5 "It was a shocking exhibition of wrestling betrayal."
- 6 "It was a savage exhibition of wrestling brutality."
- 7 "It was a brutal exhibition of wrestling savagery."
- 8 "It was a cruel exhibition of wrestling brutality."
- 9 "It was a brutal exhibition of wrestling cruelty."
- 10 "It was a brilliant exhibition of wrestling cunning."
- 11 "It was spectacular exhibition of wrestling fury."
- 12 "It was a heartwarming exhibition of wrestling coming-of-age."
- 13 "Their matches were a revelatory exhibition of wrestling intelligence."
- 14 "It was a despicable exhibition of wrestling rulebreaking."
- 15 "It was a terrifying exhibition of wrestling cruelty."
- 16 "It was a valuable exhibition of wrestling ingenuity."
- 17 "It was a surprising exhibition of wrestling intensity."
- 18 "He put on a powerhouse exhibition of wrestling ruthlessness."
- 19 "The crowd was enthralled by their colossal exhibition of wrestling might."
- 20 "It was an explosive exhibition of wrestling rage."
- 21 "It was a splendid exhibition of wrestling heroics."
- 22 "It was an ignominious exhibition of wrestling cruelty."
- 23 "It was a magnificent exhibition of wrestling art."
- 24 "It was a terrifying exhibition of wrestling savagery."
- 25 "It was a furious exhibition of wrestling intensity."

The 25 Most Frequent Cover Appearances

1	Hulk Hogan	80
2	Sting	38
3	Ric Flair	36
4	Randy Savage	30
5	Steve Austin	27
6	Shawn Michaels	26
7	Bret Hart	24
8	Lex Luger	21
9	Dusty Rhodes	19
10	The Rock	18
11	Kevin Nash	17
12	Rick Steamboat	15
13	Road Warrior Animal	14
14	Scott Steiner	14
15	Scott Hall	14
16	Road Warrior Hawk	13
17	Vince McMahon	13
18	Bill Goldberg	13
19	Ultimate Warrior	12
20	Triple-H	11
21	The Undertaker	10
22	Andre the Giant	9
23	Roddy Piper	9
24	Nikita Koloff	9
25	Brock Lesnar	9

25 Trivia Questions About *PWI* And The *PWI* Years

1 Which of the following was not a prize in a *PWI* contest? a) Dusty Rhodes' boots; b) Ric Flair's robe; c) Mil Mascaras' mask; d) Chief Jay Strongbow's headdress.

2 For several months in the 1980s, *PWI* ran a full-page ad featuring Dusty Rhodes endorsing a product that alleviates pain. What was it? a) Aleve; b) Preparation H; c) Stanback Powder; d) Dr. Dusty's Tonic.

3 "The True Story Of Bruno Sammartino," in the November 1979 issue, was authored by a) Gary Morgenstein; b) Peter King; c) Capt. Lou Albano; d) Arnold Skoaland.

4 The first color foldout featured which wrestler? a) Dusty Rhodes; b) Mil Mascaras; c) Bruno Sammartino; d) Rick Steamboat.

5 Who preceded Dr. Sidney Basil as staff psychologist, analyzing Ken Patera in 1982?

6 *PWI* angered Roddy Piper with what he perceived to be an intentional typo in the August 1982 issue. What did we call him? a) Snotty Piper; b) Rotty Piper; c) Rodney Piper; d) Rin-Tin Piper.

7 Nearly every mention of the Missouri State title in *PWI* pointed out the "fact" that it was a steppingstone to the NWA World title. How many wrestlers actually made the step?

8 Which wrestler(s) hold the record for consecutive years winning any one *PWI* award? a) Ric Flair; b) Hulk Hogan; c) Trish Stratus; d) The Road Warriors; e) both b & c; f) both a & d.

9 Name the couple that met on the job at *PWI* and later married.

10 *PWI* founder Stanley Weston got his start in publishing on what magazine: a) *The Ring*; b) *Wrestling Revue*; c) *Field & Stream*; d) *The Saturday Evening Post*.

11 *PWI*'s Wrestler of the Decade for the 1980s was Ric Flair. Which wrestler(s) attacked Flair with the trophy we presented him? a) Harley Race; b) Lex Luger; c) Barry Windham; d) Doom.

12 True or False: Matt Brock took a six-month leave of absence in 1984 for health reasons.

13 Liz Hunter was struck by which wrestler: a) Rick Rude; b) Magnificent Muraco; c) Stan Hansen; d) none of the above.

14 Name the nine men who received the *PWI* Editors' Award posthumously.

15 Which of the following never shot a photo for *PWI*: a) Jim Cornette; b) Tammy Sytch; c) Paul Heyman; d) Killer Kowalski; e) Wally Yamaguchi.

16 *PWI* was first housed in: a) Stanley Weston's basement in Rockville Centre, New York; b) West Merrick Road in Freeport, New York; c) Maple Avenue in Rockville Centre.

17 True or False: Joey Styles first met Paul Heyman in the offices of *PWI*.

18 Two illustrated covers of *PWI* were selected among our favorite covers of all-time elsewhere in this issue. There was one *other* illustrated cover. Who was on it?

19 Sugar Ray Leonard fought Marvelous Marvin Hagler on April 6, 1987. What was the significance of that day in *PWI*'s history?

20 In what year were *PWI* and its family of sports magazines purchased by its current ownership?

21 Which five columnists penned "The Steel Cage"?

22 Who never wrote a story for *PWI*: a) Bruno Sammartino; b) Rob

Van Dam; c) Bob Orton Jr.; d) Brian Pillman; e) Sting; f) none of the above

23 *Pro Wrestling Illustrated Presents The Women Of Wrestling* (Vol. 1, No. 1) had a top-50 ranking. Who was number one on that list: a) Stacy Keibler; b) Fabulous Moolah; c) June Byers; d) Mildred Burke.

24 Which *PWI* intern was implicated in a scandal to influence the selection process of the "*PWI* 500"? a) Joe Bonsignore; b) Pushpak Naik; c) Ed Emelett; d) Will Welsh.

25 True or False: Photo Editor Roy London was the great nephew of the original owner of the publishing company Stanley Weston purchased 15 years before launching *PWI*.

25. False
24. C: Ed Emelett
23. B: Fabulous Moolah
22. B: Rob Van Dam
21. Jim Schuermann, Bob Smith, Chris New York to Pennsylvania in 1993
20. 1992 (though it physically moved from left the company)
19. It was the day Editor-in-Chief Peter King
18. Vince McMahon & Eric Bischoff
17. True
16. B: West Merrick Road in Freeport, New York
15. D: Killer Kowalski
14. Johnny Valentine
13. D: None of the above
12. False
11. B: Lex Luger
10. A: *The Ring*
9. Stu Saks & Darlene Fallo
8. F: Ric Flair (Wrestler of the Year—1984, 1985, 1986); The Road Warriors (Tag Team of the Year—1983, 1984, 1985)
7. Two: Harley Race (1972/1973), Kerry Von Erich (1983/1984)
6. C: Rodney
5. Dr. Peter Lobar
4. B: Mil Mascaras
3. C: Capt. Lou Albano
2. C: Stanback Powder
1. B: Ric's Flair's robe

PWI Editors Pick the Best of the Best

Stu Saks

Publisher

Starting Year: 1979

Favorite Wrestler: Rick Steamboat

Favorite Tag Team: The Road Warriors

Favorite Match: Tiger Mask vs. Dynamite Kid, August 30, 1982, Madison Square Garden, New York, NY

Favorite Card: David Von Erich Memorial Parade of Champions, May 6, 1984, Texas Stadium, Irving, TX

Favorite Year: 1998

Favorite PWI Story: "Steamboat vs. Flair: To Hell And Back," August 1989

Biggest Disappointment: The WWF's takeover of the *Georgia Championship Wrestling* time slot on TBS

Wrestler Who I Could Call My Friend:

Bruno Sammartino

Wrestler Who Hated My Guts: Kevin Sullivan

Dave Lenker

Editor-in-Chief

Starting Year: 1993

Favorite Wrestler: Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka

Favorite Tag Team: The Road Warriors

Favorite Match: Shawn Michaels vs. Razor Ramon, March 20, 1994, Madison Square Garden, New York, NY

Favorite Card: WrestleMania X7, April 1, 2001, Astrodome, Houston, TX

Favorite Year: 1997

Favorite PWI Story: "The Truth Hurts: Hulk Hogan Is Right!" December 1996

Biggest Disappointment: The implosion of WCW and the subsequent botching of the WCW/ECW invasion by WWE

Wrestler Who I Could Call My Friend: Stacy Keibler

Wrestler Who Hated My Guts: Ultimate Warrior

Brandi Mankiewicz

Managing Editor

Starting Year: 1994

Favorite Wrestler: Gino Hernandez

Favorite Tag Team: The Hart Foundation

Favorite Match: The Shepherders vs. The Fantastics, June 14, 1986,

Louisiana Superdome, New Orleans, LA

Favorite Card: ECWA Super 8 Tournament, February 26, 2000, St. Matthew's Parish Hall, Wilmington, DE

Favorite Year: 1986

Favorite PWI Story: "Chris Adams: 'Being Blinded Has Opened My Eyes!'" June 1986

Biggest Disappointment: The sale of Jim Crockett Promotions to Ted Turner

Wrestler Who I Could Call My Friend: Charlie Haas

Wrestler Who Hated My Guts: Buh Buh Ray Dudley

Will Welsh

Senior Writer

Starting Year: 1998

Favorite Wrestler: Ric Flair

Favorite Tag Team: The Road Warriors

Favorite Match: The Road Warriors vs. The Midnight Express, November 28, 1986, The Omni, Atlanta, GA

Favorite Card: Royal Rumble, January 19, 1992, Freeman Coliseum, San Antonio, TX

Favorite Year: 1996

Favorite PWI Story: "Magnum T.A.: He's Got Millions Of Fans, But He's The Loneliest Man In Wrestling," September 1985

Biggest Disappointment: That much of the Bret Hart-Shawn Michaels feud played out while I was in the Marines and unable to follow the sport as closely as I would have liked

Wrestler Who I Could Call My Friend: Eric Bischoff

Wrestler Who Hated My Guts: Steve Corino

Harry Burkett

Senior Writer

Starting Year: 1997

Favorite Wrestler: Roddy Piper

Favorite Tag Team: Ole and Arn Anderson

Favorite Match: Rick Steamboat vs. Ric Flair, February 20, 1989, UIC Pavilion, Chicago, IL

Favorite Card: David Von Erich Memorial Parade of Champions, May 6, 1984, Texas Stadium, Irving, TX

Favorite Year: 1997

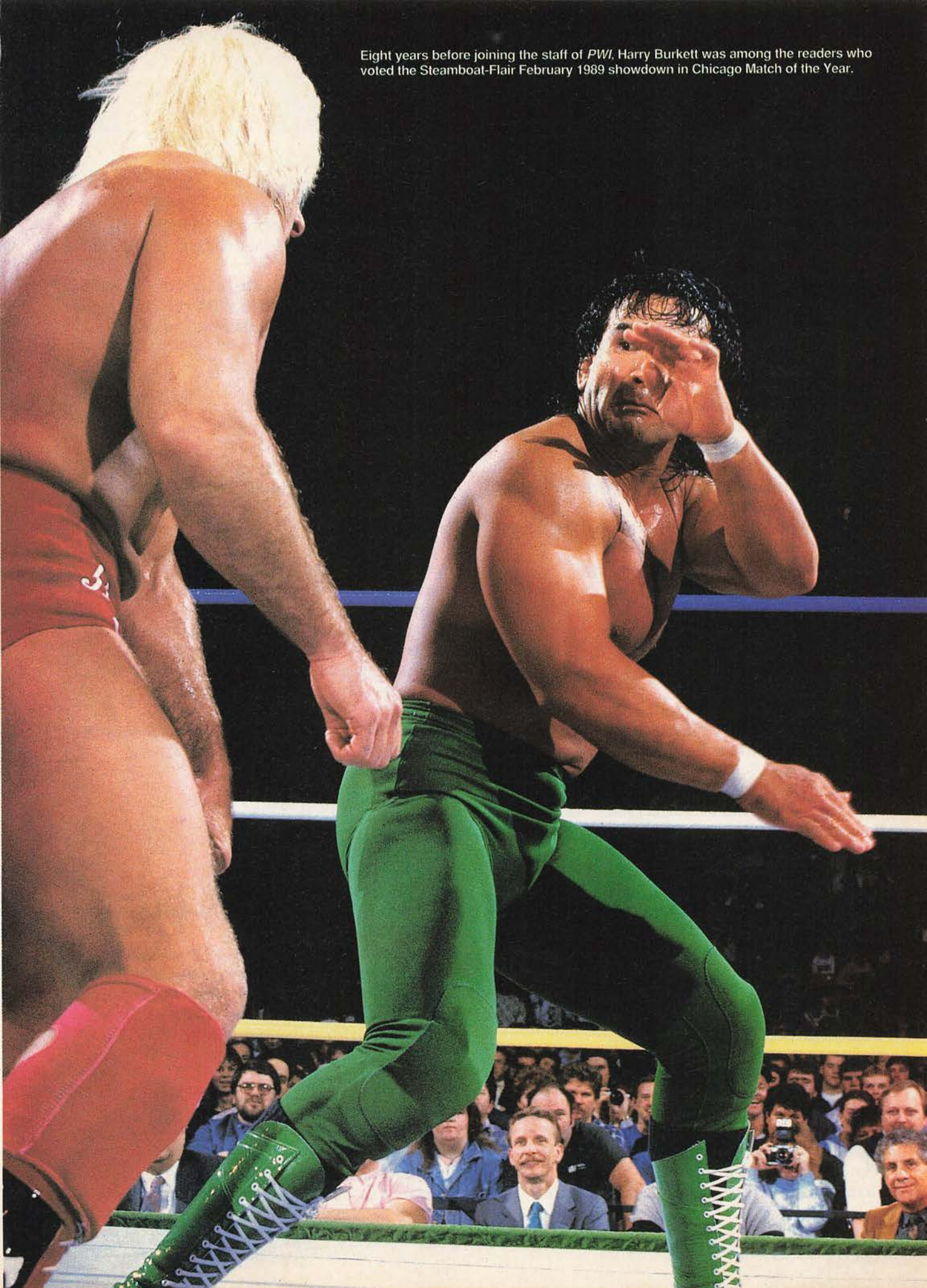
Favorite PWI Story: "Solving The Ric Flair Puzzle: Another Piece Falls Into Place For Magnum T.A.," January 1986

Biggest Disappointment: WCW going out of business

Wrestler Who I Could Call My Friend: Lou Thesz

Wrestler Who Hated My Guts: Ronnie Garvin

Eight years before joining the staff of *PWI*, Harry Burkett was among the readers who voted the Steamboat-Flair February 1989 showdown in Chicago Match of the Year.



Dan Murphy

Senior Writer

Starting Year: 1997

Favorite Wrestler: Kevin Von Erich

Favorite Tag Team: Pat Tanaka and Paul Diamond

Favorite Match: Tully Blanchard vs. Magnum T.A., November 28, 1985, Greensboro Coliseum, Greensboro, NC

Favorite Card: SummerSlam, August 29, 1988, Madison Square Garden, New York, NY

Favorite Year: 1987

Favorite PWI Story: "Kevin Von Erich: A Prisoner Of Texas," June 1983

Biggest Disappointment: The botched WCW/ECW invasion of WWE

Wrestler Who I Could Call My Friend: Dick "The Destroyer" Beyer

Wrestler Who Hated My Guts: Lex Luger

Frank Krewda

Senior Writer

Starting Year: 1997

Favorite Wrestler: Ric Flair

Favorite Tag Team: Sabu and Rob Van Dam

Favorite Match: Bruno Sammartino vs. Larry Zbyszko, August 9, 1980, Shea Stadium, Flushing, NY

Favorite Card: ECW Living Dangerously, March 1, 1998, Convention Center, Asbury Park, NJ

Favorite Year: 1998

Favorite PWI Story: "Press Conference" with Jim Ross, October 1998

Biggest Disappointment: The demise of ECW

Wrestler Who I Could Call My Friend: "Diamond" Dallas Page

Wrestler Who Hated My Guts: Bill Goldberg

Matt Brock

Contributing Writer

Starting Year: 1979

Favorite Wrestler: Bret Hart

Favorite Tag Team: Gene and Ole Anderson

Favorite Match: Dusty Rhodes & Nikita Koloff vs. The Midnight Express, April 11, 1987, Baltimore Arena, Baltimore, MD

Favorite Card: Last Tangle in Tampa, August 3, 1980,

Tampa Stadium, Tampa, FL

Favorite Year: 1981

Favorite PWI Story: "Lighting A Fire Under The Undertaker: Stop Playing With Matches That Don't Matter!" September 1988

Biggest Disappointment: The fall of territorial wrestling

Wrestler Who I Could Call My Friend: Verne Gagne

Wrestler Who Hated My Guts: Ken Patera

Liz Hunter

Contributing Writer

Starting Year: 1982

Favorite Wrestler: Rick Rude

Favorite Tag Team: Rick Steamboat and Jay Youngblood

Favorite Match: Kerry Von Erich vs. Ric Flair, May 6, 1984, Texas Stadium, Irving, TX

Favorite Card: WrestleMania I, March 31, 1985, Madison Square Garden, New York, NY

Favorite Year: 1985

Favorite PWI Story: "An In-Depth Examination: Women's Work! It Ain't What It Used To Be!" July 2001

Biggest Disappointment: That the WWF spotlight was yanked away from the women soon after the big push for WrestleMania I

Wrestler Who I Could Call My Friend: Madusa Miceli

Wrestler Who Hated My Guts: Scott Steiner

Mike Spillane

Contributing Writer

Starting Year: 1997

Favorite Wrestler: Jushin "Thunder" Liger

Favorite Tag Team: High Energy (Owen Hart and Koko B. Ware)

Favorite Match: Super Delfin, Gran Naniwa, Gran Hamada, Tiger Mask IV, and Masato Yakushiji vs. Dick Togo, Shiryu, Men's Teioh, Taka Michinoku, and Shoichi Funaki, October 10, 1996, Sumo Hall, Tokyo, Japan

Favorite Card: Royal Rumble, January 19, 1992, Knickerbocker Arena, Albany, NY

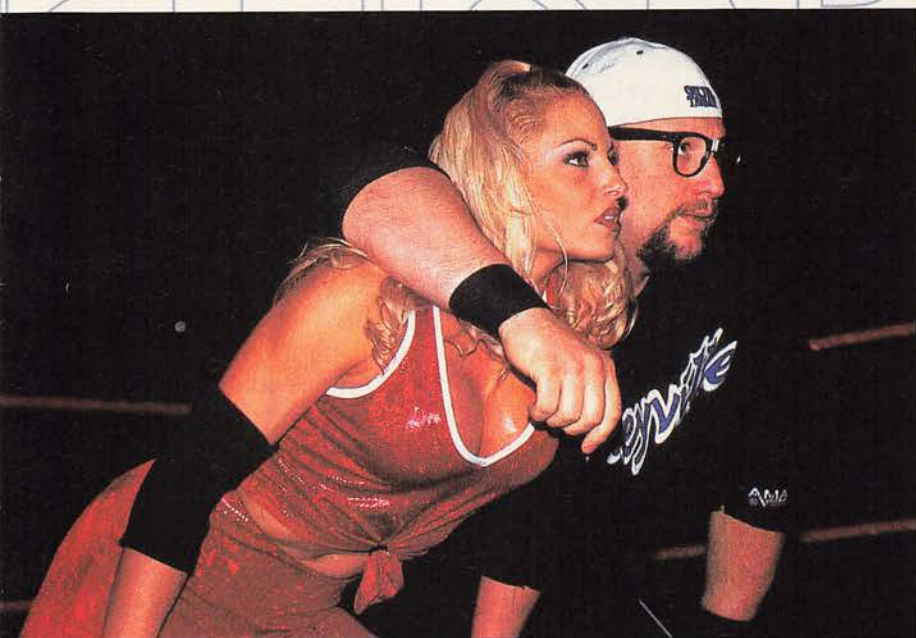
Favorite Year: 1993

Favorite PWI Story: "Jushin Liger vs. Brian Pillman: The Match That Could Destroy WCW!" July 1992

Biggest Disappointment: The destruction of the WCW cruiserweight division by WCW Creative

Wrestler Who I Could Call My Friend: King Kong Bundy

Wrestler Who Hated My Guts: Mike Quackenbush



Trish Stratus and Jason Langin get along with Buh Buh Ray Dudley, yet Brandi Mankiewicz does not. You can draw your own conclusions.

Jason Langin

Contributing Writer

Starting Year: 2003

Favorite Wrestler: Chris Benoit

Favorite Tag Team: British Bulldogs

Favorite Match: Rick Steamboat vs. Randy Savage, March 29, 1987, Silverdome, Pontiac, MI

Favorite Card: Super J Cup, April 16, 1994, Korakuen Hall, Tokyo, Japan

Favorite Year: 1987

Favorite PWI Story: "The Road Warriors Want You! 'Hey, Twerp, Do You Have The Guts To Meet Us?'" May 1986

Biggest Disappointment: The folding of ECW

Wrestler Who I Could Call My Friend:

Buh Buh Ray Dudley

Wrestler Who Hated My Guts: Booker T

James Guttman

Contributing Writer

Starting Year: 2004

Favorite Wrestler: Brian Pillman

Favorite Tag Team: Arn Anderson and Tully Blanchard

Favorite Match: Rick Steamboat vs. Randy Savage, March 29, 1987, Silverdome, Pontiac, MI

Favorite Card: WrestleMania III, March 29, 1987, Silverdome, Pontiac, MI

Favorite Year: 1998

Favorite PWI Story: "The Masters Of Their Art," July 1992

Biggest Disappointment: The WCW invasion of WWE

Wrestler Who I Could Call My Friend: Mick Foley

Wrestler Who Hated My Guts: Jim Cornette

FANTASY **WRESTLING:**
YOU CREATE THE SUPERSTARS!

Have you ever seen a wrestler on TV and said to yourself, "Who in the world thought up that idea?," or "Why is this guy main eventing? He's a loser." Most wrestling fans think they can come up with better ideas for characters and storylines. Well, now is your chance! The International Wrestling Federation (IWF) is a play-by-mail wrestling roleplaying game where you get to create your own unique wrestling character and manage his career! Watch as your wrestlers make their way through the ranks! Do you have what it takes to main event? Win prizes and compete with other players from all over the world! For only \$3, you get your first bulletin, and your first action!

From there, the sky is the limit!

Simply send your wrestler(s) name and (please be original, no real wrestler names), cash, check, or money order, to IWF, P.O. Box 541132, Flushing, NY 11354. You can also email your wrestler(s) roleplays to IWFPrezHitman@aol.com or email that address for more information.

Looking Back

Former Editors Share Their Remembrances of *PWI*

Peter King

Editor-in-Chief: 1979-1987

Can it really be 25 years since that first issue of *PWI* hit the newsstands? Or 17 years since an issue of *PWI* had my name in it?

In 1979, we were all so improbably young, burning with enthusiasm and brimming with talent. The real world and the wrestling world were simpler. The wrestling world's top villains—Ivan Koloff and Waldo Von Erich, for instance—were almost impossibly evil. Today, the real villains of the real world make those of the wrestling world seem harmless by comparison.

The business has changed, and so have we. The world has grown crueler, and the sport has become more vulgar. But that is for another column and another time.

It has been a delight for me to see *PWI* evolve into a slick and colorful package as professional and entertaining as any on the newsstand. But even more satisfying is how those of us who founded *PWI* and its sister boxing publications have also evolved.

Stu Saks, whom I first met when he was a college student, has gone from rookie writer to become a top publishing executive whose vision lights the way for *PWI*. Bill Apter remains a force of nature who has succeeded through hard work and absolute integrity. Craig Peters and Gary Morgenstein, two of the most skilled writers and finest people I ever met, have forged successful careers helping journalists do their jobs better. Dan Shocket, the most talented of all of us, sadly left us too early, but fortunately left us his legacy and decency, which guides us even today.



Peter King does his best Jay Strongbow impression for the Chief himself. Peter was *PWI*'s chief for the first eight years of its existence.

And a quick salute to those on the boxing side back then, because *PWI* would not have existed without *KO Magazine*. Then-Managing Editor Steve Farhood remains a respected writer and broadcaster, while Rich Countis has become one of the top editors at Gannett, the largest newspaper publisher in the United States.

Also, the able crew running *PWI* today deserves a thank you from those there at its birth: You have taken our baby and turned it into a respectable, handsome, and successful adult.

As for me, after leaving *PWI*, I became an editor at *Newsday*, one of the nation's largest newspapers, where I worked on some of the biggest stories of the past few decades, most notably—and most tragically—the attacks on America on September 11, 2001. Today, I am a professor of journalism. My hope is that my students, too young to read when I last worked at *PWI*, will, like us, have a career they can be proud of and be part of a publication they can point to with pride, even 25 years later.

Ken Morgan

Art Director: 1979-1993

In 1979, President and Publisher Stanley Weston called a staff meeting to announce that he wanted to launch a new wrestling magazine, one that was unlike all others in both design and editorial content and would meet the test of time. I was excited to be responsible for designing a magazine with such promise.

At the time, most wrestling publications were visually very busy with a montage of photos on the cover and headlines splattered everywhere in all directions. There was no focal point; your eyes didn't know what to look at first. The design concept for *PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED* would be more simplistic and of a sophisticated nature. Mr. Weston, being from the old school, was skeptical of the idea, but had enough faith and trust in the staff to let us proceed. Often the covers of *PWI* featured only one posed image of the sport's most popular (or sometimes unpopular) wrestler artistically photographed and accompanied by a straightforward list of featured article headlines in tasteful type fonts, all completely framed by the magazine's stylized bordered logo. It gave the cover the look of a framed portrait to be hung on a wall for display. Internally, the monthly columns and feature articles were also designed to have clean graphic elements, big bold headlines, and dynamic photography.

Month after month, we put our best efforts forward in producing a magazine that was innovative, had visual impact, featured outstanding photography, was exciting



Ken Morgan was the Captain of our art department. Now he's tops at Topps.

to read, and would keep our readers coming back for more. None of this would have been possible without the numerous talented staff members I worked with throughout my years with the magazine, such as Peter King, Bill Apter, Gary Morgenstein, Dan Shocket, Craig Peters, Stu Saks, Charlie Foster, Darlene Saks, and Joe Kalman, just to name a few.

When I reflect back on the more than 3,000 covers I designed and 200,000 editorial pages I art directed for all the various titles produced while I was employed at London, working on the issues of *PWI* was one of the most enjoyable memories for me. I hope the subscribers and dedicated followers enjoyed reading the magazine as much as I enjoyed producing it for them.

I now work in Manhattan for the Topps company, producing trading and collectible sports cards. Often on my commute home, I stop by a newsstand and pick up a copy of *PWI*. As I thumb through the pages, I find some of the original design and editorial concepts being used, although updated to reflect a more contemporary style.

Wow! Twenty-five years and still going strong. I'd say Stanley Weston's goal was accomplished.

Gary Morgenstein

Associate Editor: 1979-1981

1979. The world was a different place. A man could wear bell bottom pants, a Fu Manchu mustache, smoke at his desk, drink if he was discreet, and have the pick of the most beautiful women in town. (If only I could've saved the ones I threw back.) We were young and brave, united in a sacred mission to tell the truth, and God help anyone who got in the way of a story.

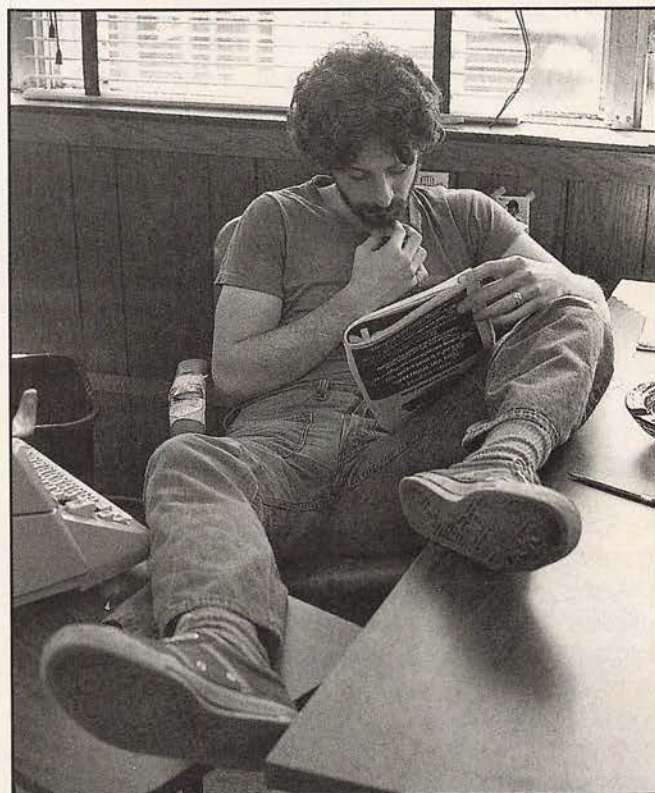
Our offices were like the information crossroads of the wrestling planet, akin to the ancient paths that once linked great empires from Julius Caesar to Genghis Khan. We never knew who would show up, only that it often meant

the day's cocktails would start a little later. Or maybe a little earlier.

We traveled a lot, sacrificed our families, our livers, and our lungs, and when we held our special press conferences, we wanted the facts without the olives. Straight up, ice on the side. Made for tense moments, but they were the athletes and we were the press, and where was it written that we were friends?

I still get queasy thinking about Dan Shocket telling Professor Tanaka he had evidence of World War II war crimes he was turning over to the Justice Department, and receiving a kick that sent his eyeballs dancing down two different sides of the street and kept him away from broads for a month. The day Bill Apter dared confront Superstar Billy Graham with photographs he shouldn't have been brave enough to take, and being held out the window by his ankles as a crowd gathered below, cheering. Or Steve Farhood, more boxer than wrestler, going toe-to-toe with Harley Race outside the men's room with only an obstinate look for a weapon.

I still awaken in the middle of the night remembering when Stu Saks confronted Andre the Giant with documents, hard and fast and double-sourced, that showed he was turning rulebreaker, and watching the massive mass



Gary Morgenstein looks pretty relaxed here, but 99 percent of the time he was the most intense and energetic member of our staff.

of inhuman beast swell up and twist Stu's neck like a bowl of cold sesame noodles, Peter King holding on to the Giant's ankles and biting, while Matt Brock brought over a revered bottle of whiskey and cracked it alongside Andre's head. Nearly a bloodbath, but we had a mission and that mission was truth.

Would the story be printed or would we be intimidated? Never, said King, pouring himself a couple of fingers of Scotch and ordering the presses to roll and the story to win out. Once again, a small victory, one hilltop at a time.

Three-and-a-half years of memories inside the trenches where a hard-nosed story could buy you a beating in a wet alley on a dark night. Or maybe you think it was easy telling Ivan Koloff he sucked? Maybe you think I've never walked the same after telling The Samoans they were through? Or maybe my mother liked putting a pistol under her pillow because her son couldn't keep his nose out of trouble.

A black eye, a puffy lip, a phone call in the middle of the night, or a darkroom full of overdeveloped film—this was the price we paid for being in the entrails of a mad world of ambition and power.

Bill, Peter, Stu, Steve, Matt, and Dan. A powerhouse team of wrestling journalists, like the 1927 New York Yankees. I had the great fortune of working, fighting, and boozing alongside this brilliant group of editors back when America was America, and a man was either with you or against you.

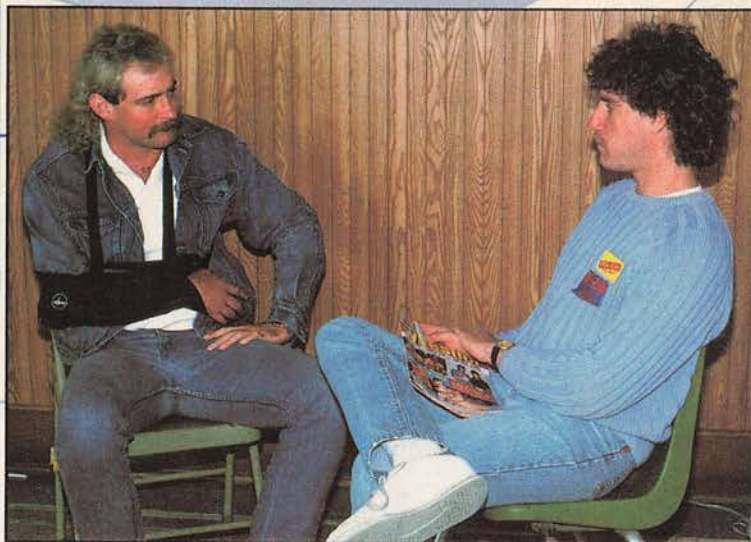
Right now I'm with a different type of organization, working as a television executive at Lifetime Television for Women. Twenty-four ladies in the department. And me. Hey, we all gotta make our sacrifices in life, right? Press my bell bottoms, baby, and refill my drink. Who said 1979 ever has to end?

Dave Rosenbaum

Associate Editor/Senior Writer: 1986-2001

Several things stand out about my time at *PWI*: the great working environment; Stanley Weston, the best boss I've ever had; Bruno Sammartino's occasional visits to the office, and the obvious pride he had in his career; sneaking into a WWF WrestleMania press conference during the era in which the WWF and *PWI* didn't get along, and tricking Vince McMahon and Hulk Hogan into doing interviews that later—I'm sure to their shock—appeared in *PWI*; getting to know Matt Brock, the most no-nonsense journalist I've ever met; lots of stories, some of them tragic.

One stands out for me: the murder of Bruiser Brody in



Magnum T.A. nearly lost his life in a car accident. Bruiser Brody lost his at the end of a knife. Dave Rosenbaum was our lead reporter on both stories.

the dressing room at Juan Ramon Loubriel Stadium in Bayamon, Puerto Rico. Jose Huertas Gonzalez (Invader I) was charged with voluntary homicide, but after several key witnesses refused to come forward, he was acquitted. I spoke extensively to some of those witnesses and was confident they'd say in court what they had conveyed to me. Perhaps fearing some form of retaliation, they ultimately sold out their dead friend and failed to come forward.

The one thing I remember most about that tragedy was that *PWI* seemed to be the only one with the whole story and the right story; the detectives and prosecutors in Puerto Rico certainly didn't have it. I spent so much time working on that story, so much time finding out what was going on, that after a few months, I wanted, personally, for Brody's killer to get punished. He never was.

I am now out of the wrestling business altogether, teaching college English and working on a novel. Recently, however, the Brody story flashed back to me, in living color, when I flew into San Juan, Puerto Rico, on a connecting flight to the British Virgin Islands. From overhead, the only way I saw it, Puerto Rico is a beautiful country, but for me, it will always be the place in which a husband and father's killer went unpunished.

Andy Rodriguez

Associate Editor/Senior Writer: 1986-1998

When I began journalism school at Boston University, I never would have believed I'd spend the first part of my career writing about Hulk Hogan and Ric Flair. But a few months before graduating, a cousin introduced me to the joys of professional wrestling, and I thought, *Gee, wouldn't writing about this stuff be a fun way to make a living?*

After I badgered then-Editor-in-Chief Peter King for two years, he hired me to write captions for photographs and proofread. So I moved out to Long Island, rented a furnished room, and I was on my way. Those first few months were strange, sitting next to Bill Apter when only a few

months earlier, I'd watched him interview Magnum T.A. on TBS. But soon I began to feel a part of the team in the place that Craig Peters always called "Wrestling Central."

Over more than six years, I met just about every big star in the sport. I took their quotes, took their pictures, and took their abuse. My greatest thrill, however, didn't come from meeting the wrestlers. It came the day I met Gordon Solie. As a fan, I'd always admired Solie's professionalism and fearlessness. He was to my mind the best broadcaster in the business. I was truly honored to shake his hand on the day he visited the *PWI* offices.

Speaking of those offices, I have never had a better time at work. Back then, the newsroom was an exclusive-



When it came to writing a story about The Rock 'n' Roll Express—or anybody else—Andy Rodriguez never choked.

ly male enclave, except when Liz Hunter dropped in occasionally. There was a constant friendly rivalry between the "wrestling guys" and the "boxing guys." When we weren't debating which was the purer sport, we were cracking each other up with jokes about cheap hotel rooms and co-workers' eccentricities. Some days I laughed so hard it was impossible to get any work done.

Do you remember the Slammys, one of Vince McMahon's many attempts to give the WWF a show business feel? Today I view the Slammys the way I view the garbage that is reality TV, but the most fun I ever had on the road was when Dave Rosenbaum, Gian Trotta, and I drove down to Atlantic City for the inaugural Slammys telecast. No, The Honky Tonk Man wasn't the greatest Intercontinental champion of all-time (sorry, Dave), but his rendition of "I'm Just A Honky Tonk Man" might be the most amusing bit of silliness ever captured on tape. Priceless.

When *PWI* moved its offices to Pennsylvania, I decided to move back home to New Jersey, but I kept in touch by continuing to freelance for several more years. I was glad to stay connected with the sport, but I missed the camaraderie of working in the office with the guys. I also missed being one of the youngest men in the office. Today I work as a bookseller and I'm quite a bit older than most of my colleagues. Heck, they were just babies when the first WrestleMania was held. Some weren't even born!

Even more amazing is the number of books about pro wrestling I see on the shelves these days. I'm gratified to see the sport became more popular than ever, and I'm thrilled that *PWI* is still here to cover it all. Glad I was along for the ride.

Al Bello

Photo Editor: 1990-1993

I look back on my days with *PWI* from 1990 to 1993 as a great learning experience for a guy who was fresh out of college and had not a clue of how things were in the working world.

The staff at *PWI* was very creative and mostly upbeat in spite of the immense pressure that was constantly put upon us to churn out more material. If I remember correctly, there were something like eight wrestling magazines going at the same time at one point.

I also enjoyed the times when wrestlers would stop by for an interview or photo shoot. Two that come to mind are Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka and "Macho Man" Randy Savage. Neither broke character the whole time he was there. They really portrayed that this was the way they walked, talked, and acted 24/7. To this day, I remember Snuka calling me "brother" every other word and "Macho Man" talking about himself in the third person as if he were God. I guess in his mind, he was.

As for me, I have worked as a sports photographer for Getty Images (formerly Allsport) since 1993. My Web site is www.albello.com



Al Bello is one of the world's top sports photographers, but shooting wrestling and boxing for London Publishing is where he developed his career focus.

if you are interested in learning more about me and my work.

Gersh Kuntzman

Assistant Editor: 1988-1989

I never should have been hired by PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED.

Don't get me wrong, I love wrestling. I grew up watching Bruno Sammartino, Andre the Giant, and, of course, Mil Mascaras (how did he breathe in that thing?!). But when I got out of college—with my liberal arts degree and the cockeyed optimism that comes from not knowing any better—pro wrestling was just a fond memory of a more carefree, innocent time, not a career path.

The year was 1987. The stock market had just crashed. The economy was in recession. And if you'd asked people what the Internet was, the answer you'd hear most would be, "The villain in the new James Bond movie." In that strapped era, 22-year-olds with no experience were not on many must-hire lists.

Every day, the mailman brought new confirmation of my unplanned obsolescence. "Thank you for your recent letter seeking employment, but ..." read each and every one of these letters delivered by my friendly postman (at least *he* had a job). I was always stunned: How could [insert company name here] reject me, a man with such pluck, verve, talent, and a functioning car? It was bad enough that I was living in my parents' basement, but it hurt to be rebuffed so summarily.

It was only after months of constant rejection that the realization hit me: These companies weren't rejecting Gersh Kuntzman; they were rejecting Gersh Kuntzman's *resume*! They didn't even know me! I knew that if only I could meet these nameless automatons in human resources, I would promptly be invited into the corridors of power, wealth, and success.

But if my resume couldn't get me in the door, what could? I looked around for inspiration, but all I saw was a battered pull-out couch, an old 8-track tape player, and my father's collection of *National Geographic*s. And then it hit me: This is the Gersh Kuntzman that my future bosses should meet—the depressed Gersh Kuntzman! The desperate Gersh Kuntzman! The living-in-his-parents'-basement Gersh Kuntzman!

Had it been the Internet era, I would

have set up a Webcam, bought a domain name (hirelosergersh.com, perhaps), and invited my would-be bosses into my miserable subterranean life. But I did the best I could, given the limitations of this innocent age: I got out the Super-8 camera and filmed the typical day in the life of unemployed Gersh Kuntzman.

The historic eight-minute film opens with me on that pullout couch musing about a social life stunted by the proximity of my overprotective parents and ends with a guided tour of my refrigerator ("Frozen bread?" I asked. "Who freezes bread? Only Bernice Kuntzman!"). Along the way, we meet Gersh Kuntzman—Woody Allen delivery, Bozo the Clown style Jew-fro, warts, and all.

Is it any wonder that the tape—sent to some of the most important news organizations and *Fortune* 500 companies in the land—failed to get me gainful employment?

But then the tape landed on the right desk at PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED. The company had just filled a position with a bona fide wrestling expert, but when the editors saw this stunning footage, they actually created a new position for me.

"We knew we had to work with you," said Editor-in-Chief Stu Saks. "You were so ridiculous. We knew you'd fit in."

True, the circumstances of my hiring were unusual, but my year at *PWI* taught me the fundamentals that would carry me upward in the fast-paced world of journalism. Soon, I'd gotten a job at a weekly in California, which led to a reporting job at the *New York Daily News*, and, eventually, my current job at *The New York Post*.

Perhaps I owe it all to my mother's frozen bread.



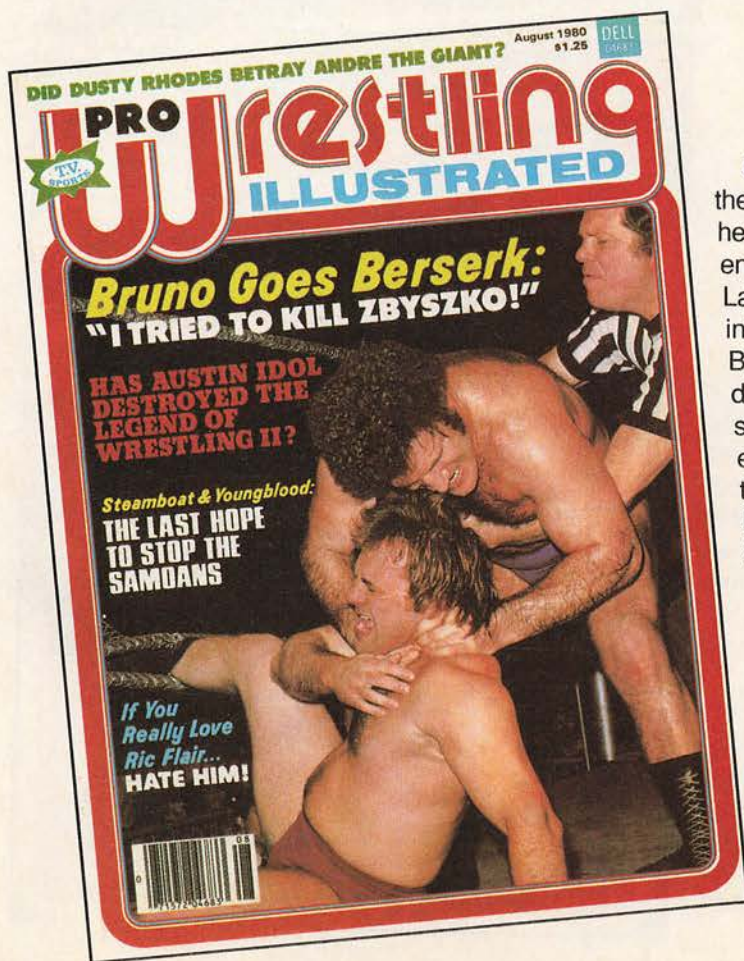
We all looked up to Gersh Kuntzman, though this picture taken with Missy Hyatt and Eddie Gilbert might be a little deceiving.

OUR 25 FAVORITE PWI COVERS

It's the first decision we have to make about every issue of PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED. Who gets the cover? In the mid-1980s, that was usually an easy question to answer: Hulk Hogan! (Again? Didn't we put him on the last cover? And the four before that?)

Okay, it wasn't always that easy. But you have to pick a hot subject so as to make the cover (and hence the entire magazine) appealing to as many potential readers as possible. If the cover doesn't attract your attention at the newsstand, you won't give the magazine much of a look, right? And Hulk Hogan was white-hot for so long. But it's more than the subject that makes a great cover. You also need the right photo or photos (or illustration), an intriguing headline/story to go along with it, and a good graphic artist's touch. Sometimes the simple approach works with all three.

Believe us when we tell you that putting together our 25 favorite covers of the last 25 years was no easy task. But something about each one of these caught our eyes, and we'll let you know what it was in each case. See which ones *you* remember ... and which you're enjoying for the first time!



AUGUST 1980

Cover Story: Bruno Sammartino was always one of the sport's true class acts. Okay, *almost* always. When he lost his temper, he *really* lost his temper. And nothing enraged him more than the betrayal of former protege Larry Zbyszko. Larry Z didn't know what he got himself into. The headline for the cover story—"Bruno Goes Berserk: 'I Tried To Kill Zbyszko!'" sums it up nicely. "I don't know, something went crazy inside me," Bruno said of his maniacal actions during the match, which ended when he was disqualified. "I saw red and wanted to kill him. I'm not happy about what I did. I'm ashamed. Really I am." Long-time observers of "Da Brune" said they never saw such an outburst from him.

Eye-Catcher: The effort put forth by referee Dick Kroll before calling for the DQ

Also In This Issue: "Adonis And Ventura: Why They Choke In Championship Matches" ... "If You Really Love Ric Flair, Hate Him" ... "Has Austin Idol Destroyed The Legend Of Mr. Wrestling II?" ... "The Von Erich Blitzkrieg: Target: Harley Race" ... "Did Dusty Rhodes Betray Andre The Giant?" ... "Steamboat And Youngblood: The Last Hope To Stop The Samoans" ... Press Conference: Hulk Hogan

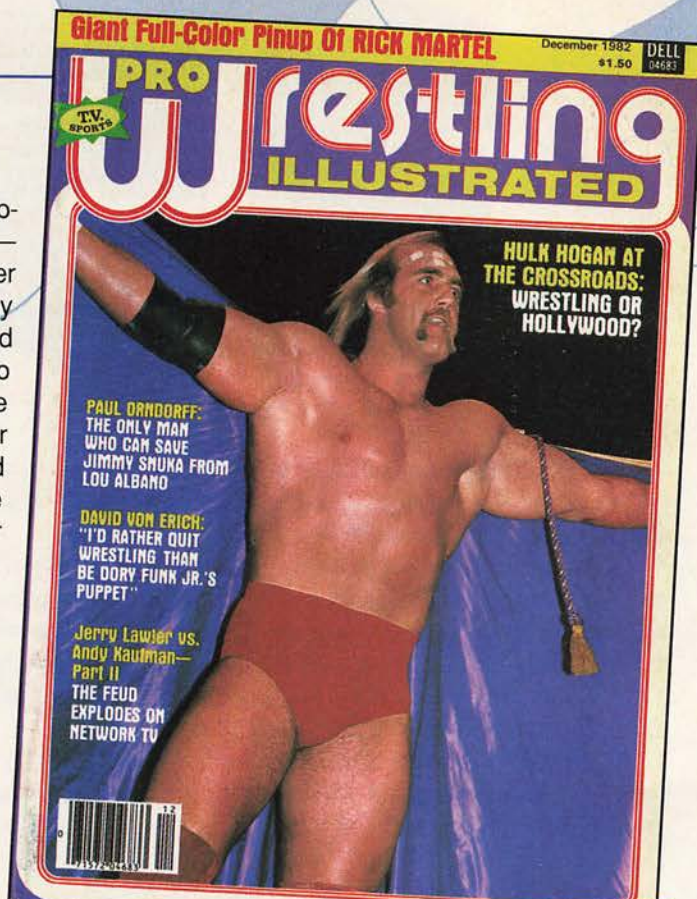
OUR 25 FAVORITE PWI COVERS

DECEMBER 1982

Cover Story: "Hulkamania" hadn't even started sweeping the nation yet (it was called "Hulkmania" at this point—really), and already there was speculation as to whether Hulk Hogan's role in *Rocky III* would be the first of many blockbusters for him, as to whether he was more interested in Hollywood than the squared circle even in 1982. Not so fast, jabroni! The "Hulkster" said in an interview for the story "Hulk Hogan At The Crossroads: Wrestling Or Hollywood?" that he could do both and that he wanted nothing more than to wrest that elusive AWA World title from Nick Bockwinkel. Besides, the idea of a wrestler becoming a major motion picture star was kind of far-fetched!

Eye-Catcher: The headline type along Hogan's robe

Also In This Issue: "Butch Reed: The Uncrowned NWA Champion" ... "Paul Orndorff: The Only Man Who Can Save Jimmy Snuka From Lou Albano" ... "David Von Erich: 'I'd Rather Quit Wrestling Than Be Dory Funk Jr.'s Puppet'" ... "Jerry Lawler vs. Andy Kaufman—Part II—The Feud Explodes On Network TV" ... Press Conference: Capt. Lou Albano ... Centerfold: Rick Martel

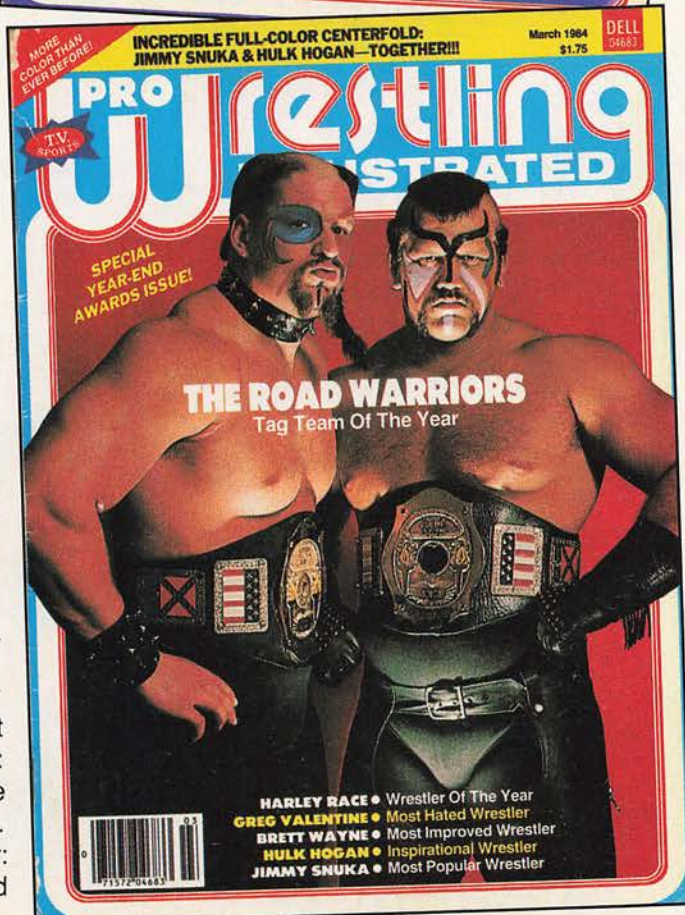


MARCH 1984

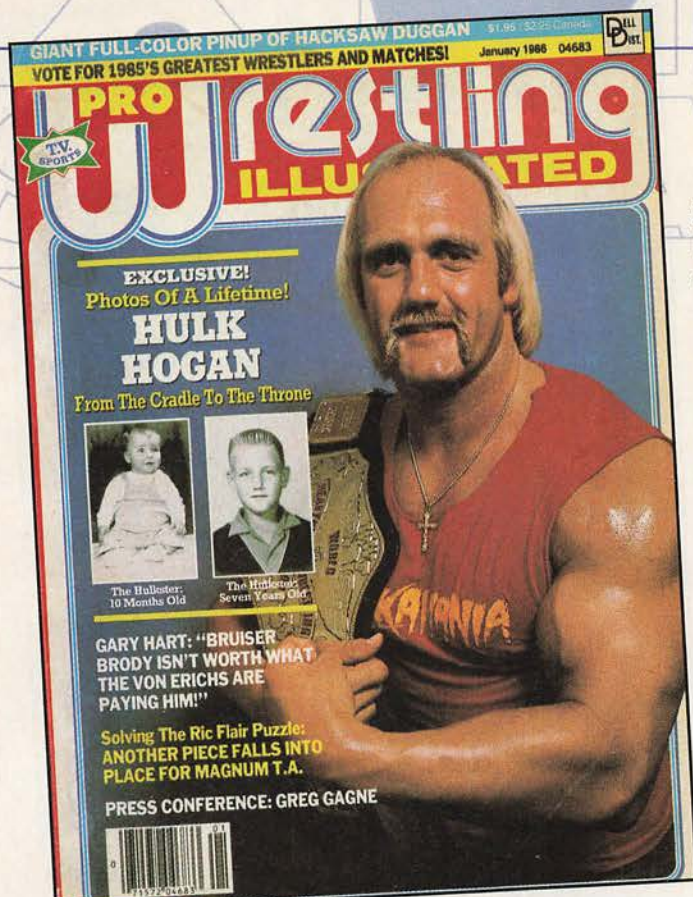
Cover Subjects: It's usually a no-brainer when it comes time to put together the year-end issue of *PWI* that the Wrestler of the Year gets featured most prominently on the cover. There have been exceptions over the last quarter-century, and for 1983, it was a no-brainer that the *Tag Team* of the Year got the nod. In fact, The Road Warriors got the cover all to themselves. And they were just starting to dominate the wrestling world.

Eye-Catcher: The "horror lighting," executed with a highlight positioned at Hawk and Animal's feet

Also In This Issue: Most Popular Wrestler: Jimmy Snuka ... Most Hated Wrestler: Greg Valentine ... Most Improved Wrestler: Brett Wayne ... Manager of the Year: James J. Dillon ... Wrestler of the Year: Harley Race ... Match of the Year: Harley Race vs. Ric Flair ... Inspirational Wrestler: Hulk Hogan ... Rookie of the Year: Angelo Mosca Jr. ... Editors' Award: The Grand Wizard



Wrestling
25
years

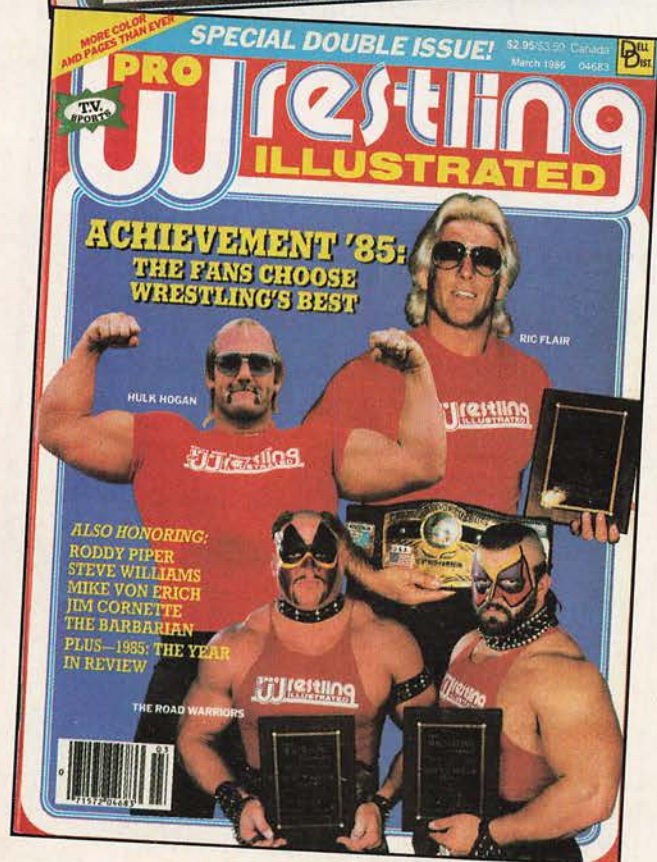


JANUARY 1986

Cover Story: What a (big) beautiful baby, what a brute of a man! For the first time anywhere, Hulk Hogan's baby pictures were published—along with pictures of him at various stages of his pre-wrestling life. *PWI* called the feature "Photos Of A Lifetime! Hulk Hogan: From The Cradle To The Throne." There were pictures of him in diapers, on a tractor, riding a horse, and on the baseball and football fields as a youngster (his baseball career ended when he tore cartilage and split a bone in his pitching arm at age 14). Then there were the poses of him in his various bands—Koco, Ruckus, and Infinity's End. Hulk Hogan, this was your life before the squared circle beckoned to you!

Eye-Catcher: The symmetry of the three photos and the headline

Also In This Issue: "Solving The Ric Flair Puzzle: Another Piece Falls Into Place For Magnum T.A." ... "Gary Hart: 'Bruiser Brody Isn't Worth What The Von Erichs Are Paying Him!'" ... Press Conference: Greg Gagne ... Centerfold: Hacksaw Duggan



MARCH 1986

Cover Subjects: The decade that was the 1980s was summed up quite nicely (and the decade was barely half over at the time!) by the cover of our year-end spectacular for 1985. Three of the big winners in Achievement Award balloting were featured prominently—The Road Warriors (Tag Team of the Year for the third consecutive year), Hulk Hogan (capturing, surprisingly, his *first* Most Popular Wrestler honors), and Ric Flair (winning for Wrestler of the Year for the second year in a row, and the third time overall).

Eye-Catcher: Those wonderful T-shirts (particularly the Warriors' custom alteration)

Also In This Issue: Rookie of the Year: The Barbarian ... Most Improved Wrestler: Steve Williams ... Most Hated Wrestler: Roddy Piper ... Match of the Year: Hulk Hogan & Mr. T vs. Roddy Piper & Paul Orndorff ... Manager of the Year: Jim Cornette ... Inspirational Wrestler: Mike Von Erich ... Editors' Award: Dan Shocket ... "1985: The Year In Review"

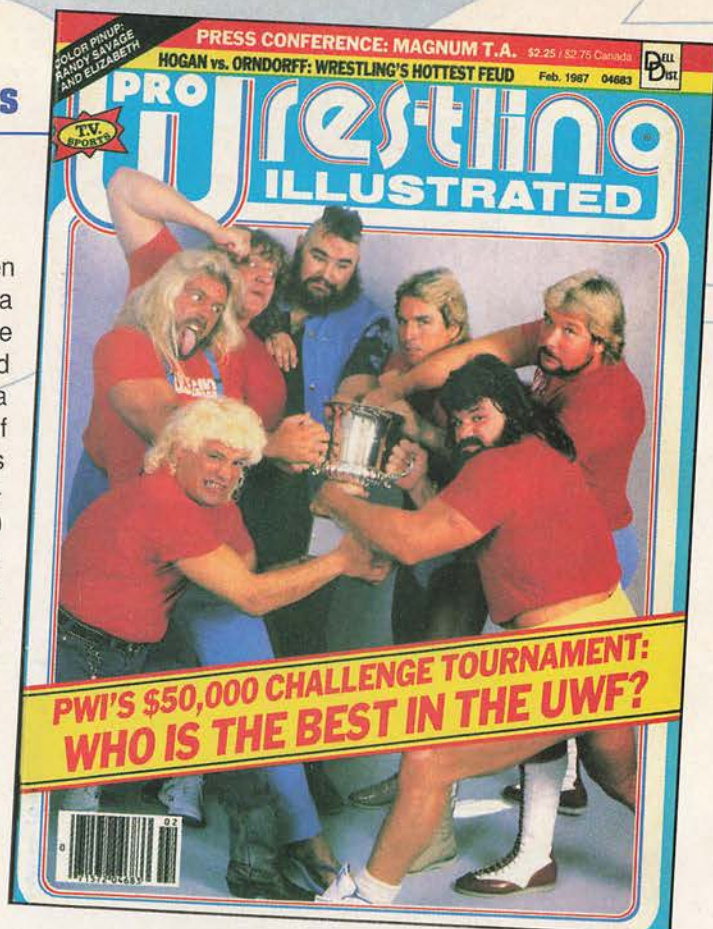
OUR **25** FAVORITE PWI COVERS

FEBRUARY 1987

Cover Story: A solid week of negotiations between high-ranking officials with both organizations paid off in a big way, as the Universal Wrestling Federation, then one of the top promotions in the U.S., and *PWI* announced plans to hold the \$50,000 *PWI/UWF* Challenge Cup, a single-elimination tournament to run over a period of seven weeks. The cover photo saw seven of the UWF's finest posing with their mitts on the trophy they all coveted. The accompanying feature—"PWI's \$50,000 Challenge Tournament: Who Is The Best In The UWF?"—laid out the logistics of the tourney and looked at the participants. Terry Gordy, Hacksaw Duggan, and Chris Adams were among the favorites. A young Sting was a longshot. Steve Williams ultimately prevailed.

Eye-Catcher: Forget the Cup and the \$50 G's, this was the only chance for a few of these guys to get on the cover and they were going to make the most of it!

Also In This Issue: "Hulk Hogan vs. Paul Orndorff: Wrestling's Hottest Feud!" ... "World Championship Wrestling Confidential: Baby Doll Tells All!" ... "For The Good Of Wrestling: Scott Hall Must Shut Col. DeBeers' Mouth!" ... Press Conference: Magnum T.A. ... Centerfold: Randy Savage and Elizabeth

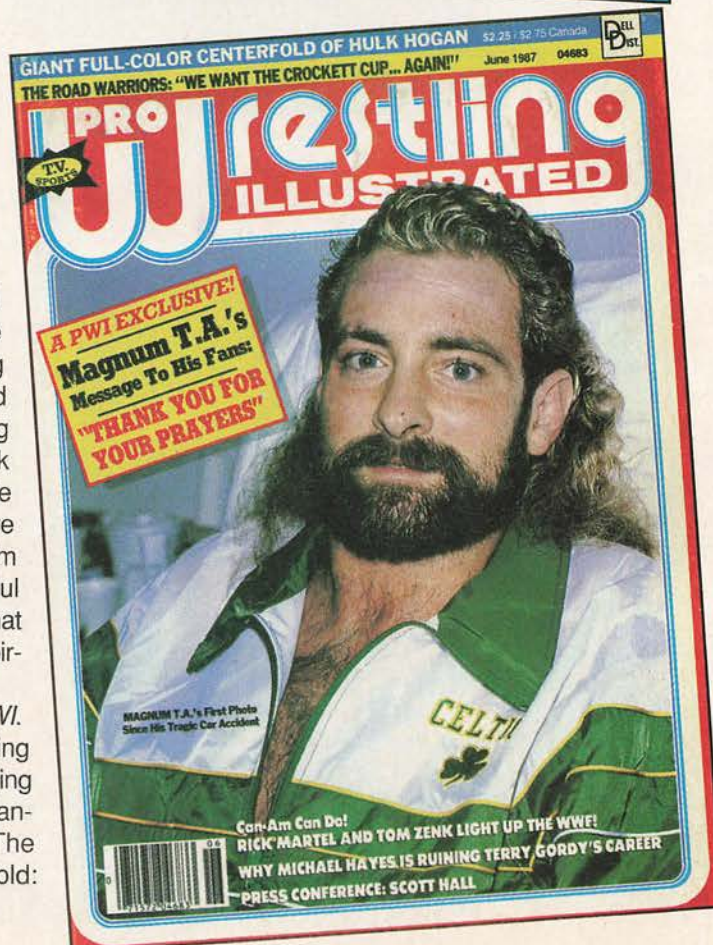


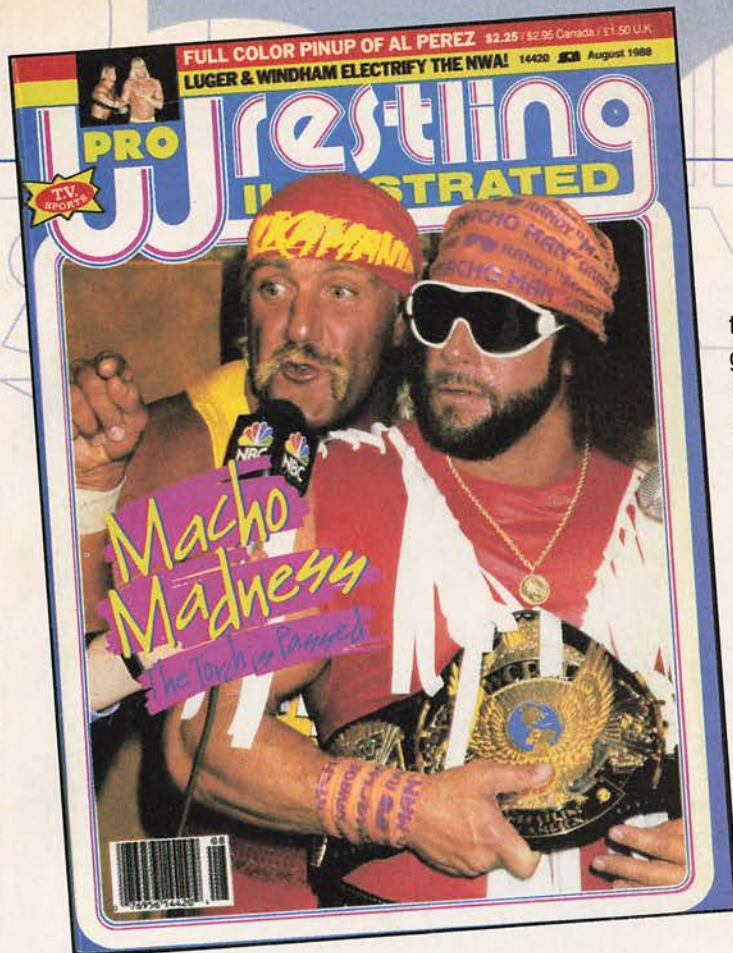
JUNE 1987

Cover Story: It had to be one of the most emotional stories *PWI* ever published, and it was also one of the least complicated. Less than four months after getting into a car accident that ended his wrestling career and nearly left him paralyzed, Magnum T.A., still recovering in the hospital, asked for an opportunity to write a thank you note to all the people who sent him letters, made phone calls to him, and prayed for him. He wouldn't have made it without them, he insisted. We proudly gave him that forum. He wrote extensively about the wonderful friendship with Nikita Koloff, once his blood enemy, that was born out of this terrible accident. It was all truly inspiring to everyone.

Eye-Catcher: A sad time for wrestling, a coup for *PWI*.

Also In This Issue: "Why Michael Hayes Is Ruining Terry Gordy's Career!" ... "The Road Warriors Are Getting Mean: 'We Want The Crockett Cup ... Again!'" ... "Can-Am Can Do! Rick Martel And Tom Zenk Light Up The WWF!" ... Press Conference: Scott Hall ... Centerfold: Hulk Hogan





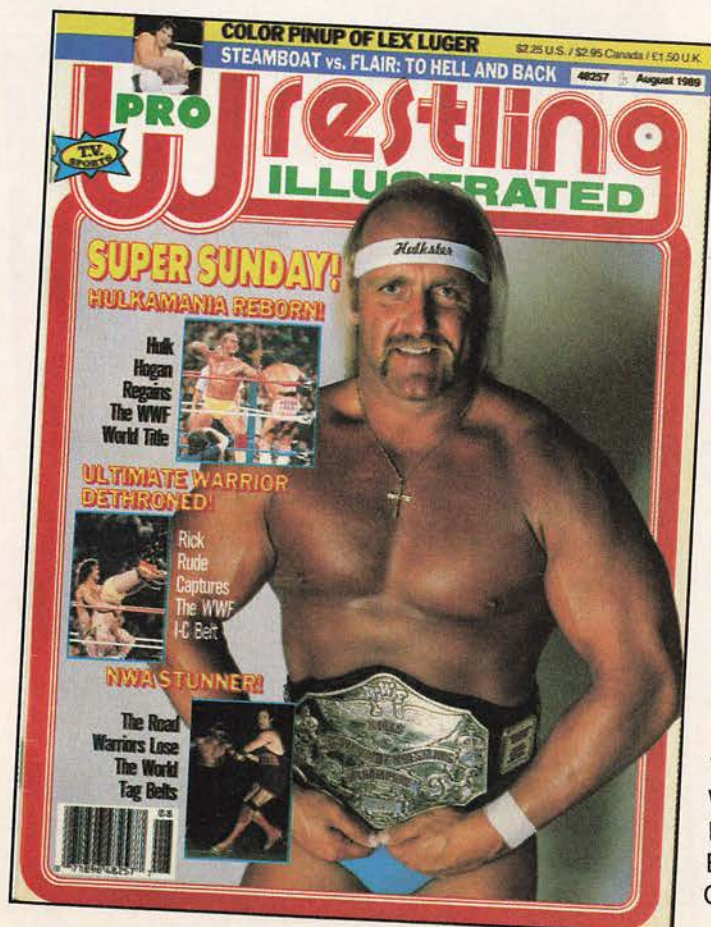
Wrestling
25
years

AUGUST 1988

Cover Story: Four-plus years after he first captured the WWF World title, and "Hulkamania" kicked into high gear, Hulk Hogan passed the torch to his good buddy—who was soon to be his arch-enemy—Randy Savage. "Macho Madness! The Torch Is Passed" was the headline, and the story examined just what went down in the one-night tournament for the vacant WWF championship that an exhausted Savage won (with help from Elizabeth and Hogan) by beating Ted DiBiase in the finals. "Macho Madness is running wild!" the story concluded. No one knew at the time that Hogan would be taking his torch back and passing it ... and taking it back and passing it again at least a handful of times over the next 15 years.

Eye-Catcher: You can keep the dark "attitude" colors; we'll take the wrestlers of the '80s every time

Also In This Issue: "Bamm Bamm—Out Go The Lights: Kerry Von Erich's Darkest Hour" ... "Dillon Sends Another Horseman To The Chair As Luger & Windham Electrify The NWA!" ... "Ultraviolence In Memphis: Ban Eddie Gilbert!" ... Press Conference: Bruno Sammartino ... Centerfold: Al Perez



AUGUST 1989

Cover Story: "Hulkamania" wasn't dead—it was just sort of on hiatus for 14 months. Even without the World title belt strapped around his waist, Hulk Hogan was the man in the WWF in 1988 and 1989. But that shiny gold hardware looked nice back around his waist following his victory over Randy Savage at WrestleMania V. The story "Hulkamania Reborn! Hulk Hogan Regains The WWF World Title!" recapped in great detail one of his greatest triumphs over one of his fiercest rivals. He became only the second man to win the WWF title twice. But this was just one of three major title changes to occur on what was deemed "Super Sunday" in wrestling.

Eye-Catcher: The vivid detail of the photo

Also In This Issue: "NWA Stunner! The Road Warriors Lose The World Tag Belts!" ... "Ultimate Warrior Dethroned! Rick Rude Captures The WWF I-C Belt!" ... "Rick Steamboat vs. Ric Flair: To Hell And Back" ... Press Conference: Dusty Rhodes ... Centerfold: Lex Luger

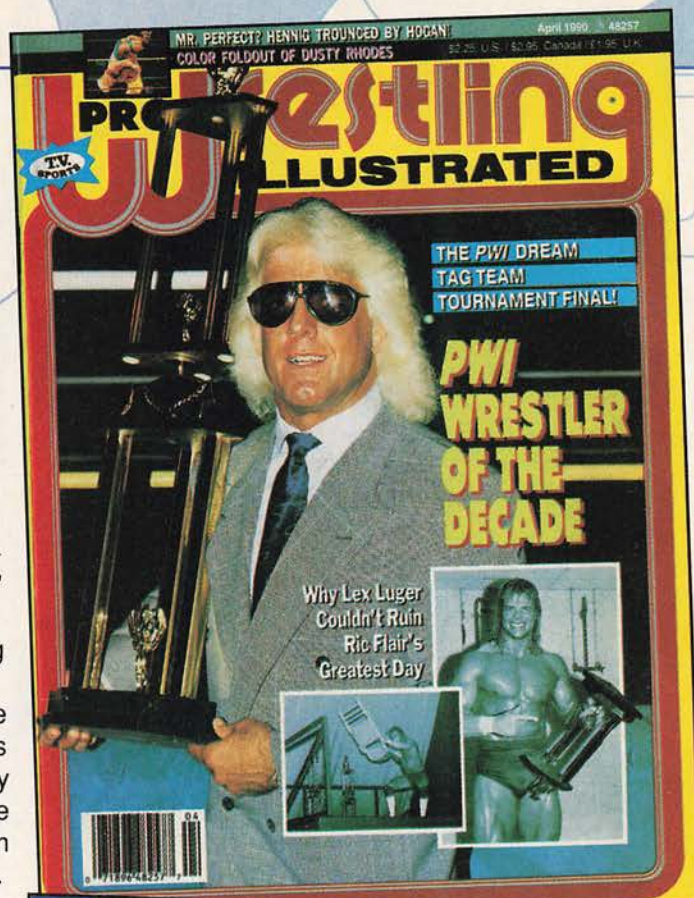
OUR 25 FAVORITE PWI COVERS

APRIL 1990

Cover Story: Three NWA U.S. titles mean more than six NWA World titles. *Huh?* That was Lex Luger's reasoning as he attempted to make a case for why he deserved *PWI's* Wrestler of the Decade honors for the 1980s more than the man who got the trophy, Ric Flair. Ridiculous, indeed, but that didn't stop Luger from smashing the trophy to bits at Clash of the Champions IX. (Luckily, we got a cover shot of the "Nature Boy" with it before it was destroyed!) The story "PWI Wrestler Of The Decade: Why Lex Luger Couldn't Ruin Ric Flair's Greatest Day!" featured an intense war of words between the two men. Flair insisted that what Luger did would provide greater inspiration for him to beat the "Total Package" senseless in future matches.

Eye-Catcher: Only Ric Flair can get away with looking like a *GQ* cover boy on a wrestling magazine

Also In This Issue: "Any Opponent Anytime: The Rockers Command Respect" ... "Hulk Hogan Gets Revenge! 'Mr. Perfect' Isn't Perfect Anymore!" ... "Jerry Lawler: 'The Fans Have Changed, Not Me!'" ... "The Winners Are Announced! The *PWI* Dream Tag Team Tournament Final" ... Press Conference: Sting ... Centerfold: Dusty Rhodes

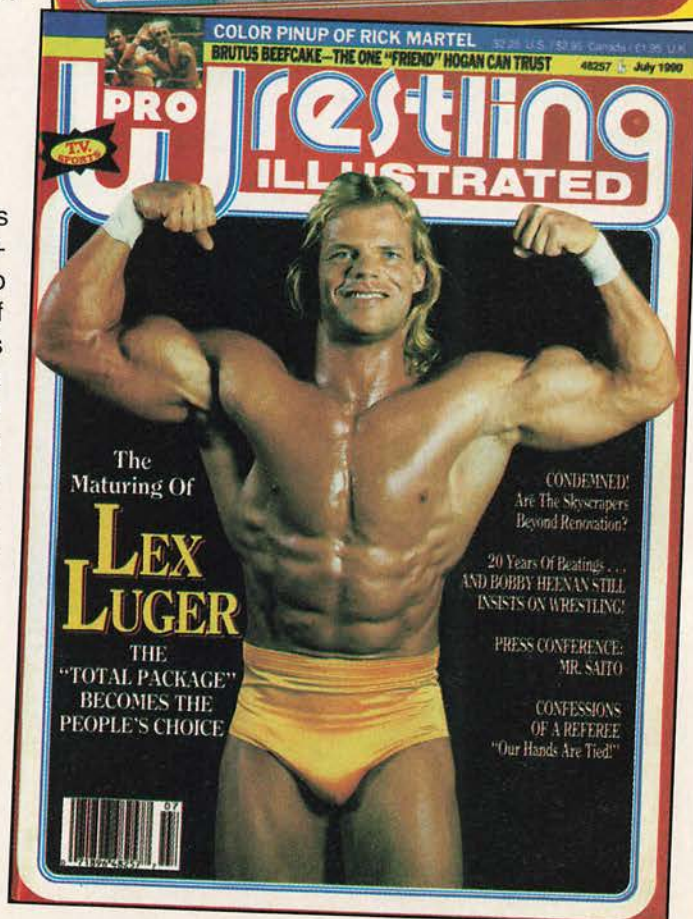


JULY 1990

Cover Story: A mature Lex Luger? Just a few months after he smashed Ric Flair's Wrestler of the Decade trophy in a fit of jealousy, *PWI* actually used that word to describe his Lexcellence. The story—"The Maturing Of Lex Luger: The 'Total Package' Becomes The People's Choice"—cited him making his friendship with Sting a greater priority than his quest to win the NWA World title as a sign that Luger was through flip-flopping between fan favorite and rulebreaker status. Sting certainly thought he saw a change in his sometimes-friend/sometimes-enemy. "To me, Lex is a real man. He's come a long way," he said. Maybe it was wishful thinking on all our parts.

Eye-Catcher: A cut wrestler on a black background really pops

Also In This Issue: "Confessions Of A Referee: 'Our Hands Are Tied!'" ... "Condemned! Are The Skyscrapers Beyond Renovation?" ... "Brutus Beefcake—The One 'Friend' Hulk Hogan Can Trust" ... "20 Years Of Beatings—And Bobby Heenan Still Insists On Wrestling!" ... Press Conference: Mr. Saito ... Centerfold: Rick Martel



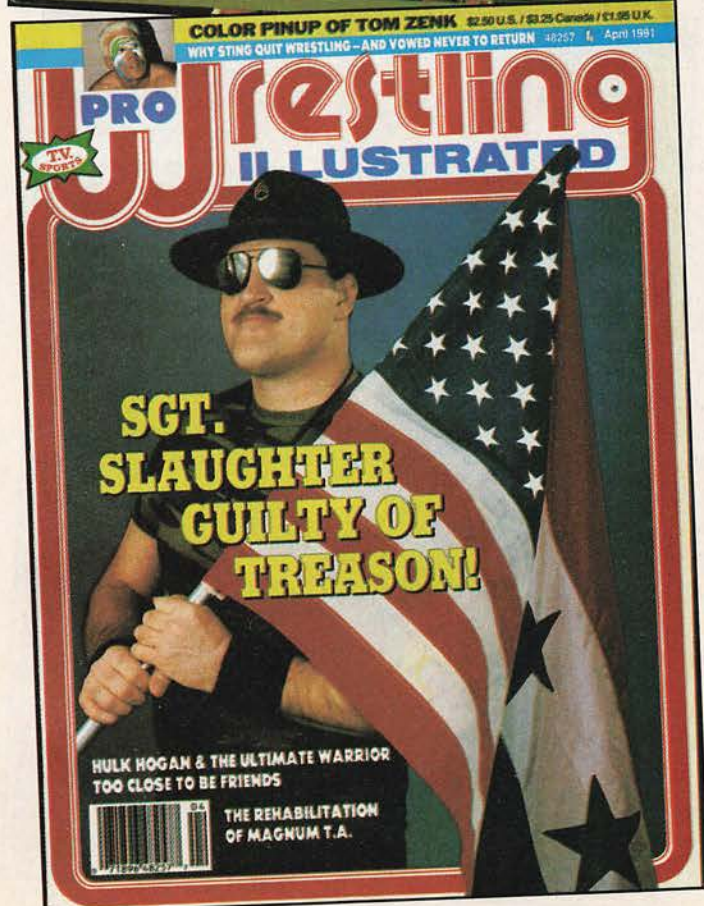
turning
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AUGUST 1990

Cover Story: Two years after he passed the WWF torch to Randy Savage, Hulk Hogan had it back and was passing it again in front of about 68,000 friends at SkyDome in Toronto. "WrestleMania VI: Complete Coverage Of The Ultimate Warrior's Ultimate Victory" chronicled a rare fan favorite vs. fan favorite WWF title match, one in which I-C champion Warrior cleanly pinned Hogan for Hogan's World championship. Their match would be voted the year's finest by *PWI* readers. And it would take Hogan all of 51 weeks to get his hands around that golden torch again.

Eye-Catcher: The position of our photographer was luck; the perfect focus was not

Also In This Issue: "Larry Zbyszko Regains The AWA World Belt: 'America Owes Me A Debt Of Gratitude!'" ... "10 Reasons Why Ultimate Warrior Will Be The Greatest WWF Champion Ever ... And 10 Reasons He Won't!" ... "Title vs. Title In The NWA? Pillman & Zenk Challenge The Steiners" ... "*PWI* Japanese Report: Terry Gordy & Steve Williams Extend A Tradition Of Brutality" ... Press Conference: Buddy Rogers, Ivan Koloff, & Bob Backlund



APRIL 1991

Cover Story: You don't just go around accusing a guy of treason without good reason. But Sgt. Slaughter was guilty as charged as far as *PWI* and millions of wrestling fans were concerned. There was no need for a long, drawn-out trial. We were judge and jury. The story—"Sgt. Slaughter: Guilty Of Treason!"—pointed out just how despicable his choosing to abandon the U.S. and sympathize with Iraq during the Persian Gulf War was, especially for a man who had been such an American patriot for so, so long. His promo at Survivor Series 1990 was particularly disturbing, as he ripped into American soldiers serving in the Gulf. Included with the feature was a transcript of a letter signed by five servicemen stationed in the Gulf that put Slaughter in his place.

Eye-Catcher: In the days before the Adobe Photoshop art program was used so effectively, a flag of Ameriqa was a rare thing

Also In This Issue: "Now It Can Be Revealed: Why Sting Quit Wrestling—And Vowed Never To Return" ... "A *PWI* Exclusive: The Rehabilitation Of Magnum T.A." ... "This Isn't Wrestling! The Jerry Lawler-Eddie Gilbert Feud Goes Too Far—Again!" ... "Hulk Hogan & Ultimate Warrior: Too Close To Be Friends" ... Press Conference: Jesse Ventura ... Centerfold: Tom Zenk

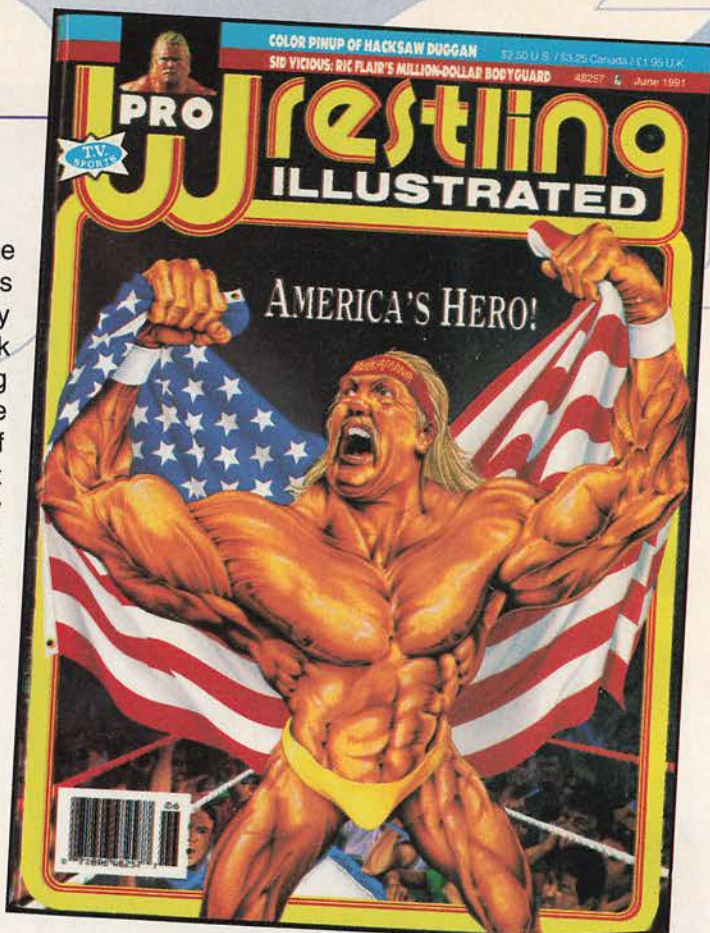
OUR 25 FAVORITE PWI COVERS

JUNE 1991

Cover Story: "America's Hero!" was the only headline we chose for this cover, and virtually anyone could guess the cover subject without even seeing the extraordinary painting produced by William Robert Laird: It was Hulk Hogan, brother! Hogan didn't just wave an American flag in the ring to show support for U.S. troops fighting in the Gulf War—he embarked on a whirlwind week-long tour of military bases in an effort to help boost morale. Fort Bragg in North Carolina was among his stops. "It's really hard for me to describe how good it felt," said Pvt. First Class Crystal S. Sain, a journalist who documented Hogan's day with Marines at Fort Bragg. "Everyone here was so impressed with him." Oh, and a WrestleMania VII showdown with the traitorous Sgt. Slaughter just happened to be looming.

Eye-Catcher: The complexity of the artwork, the simplicity of the headline

Also In This Issue: "Cactus Jack: No Regard For His Opponents—And Even Less For Himself!" ... "The Inevitable Clash: Ron Simmons vs. Butch Reed—Which One Is Doomed?" ... "Ric Flair's Annual Bonus Payout!" ... "The Nasty Boys Diss The Legion Of Doom: And There'll Be Hell To Pay!" ... Press Conference: Scott Steiner ... Centerfold: Hacksaw Duggan

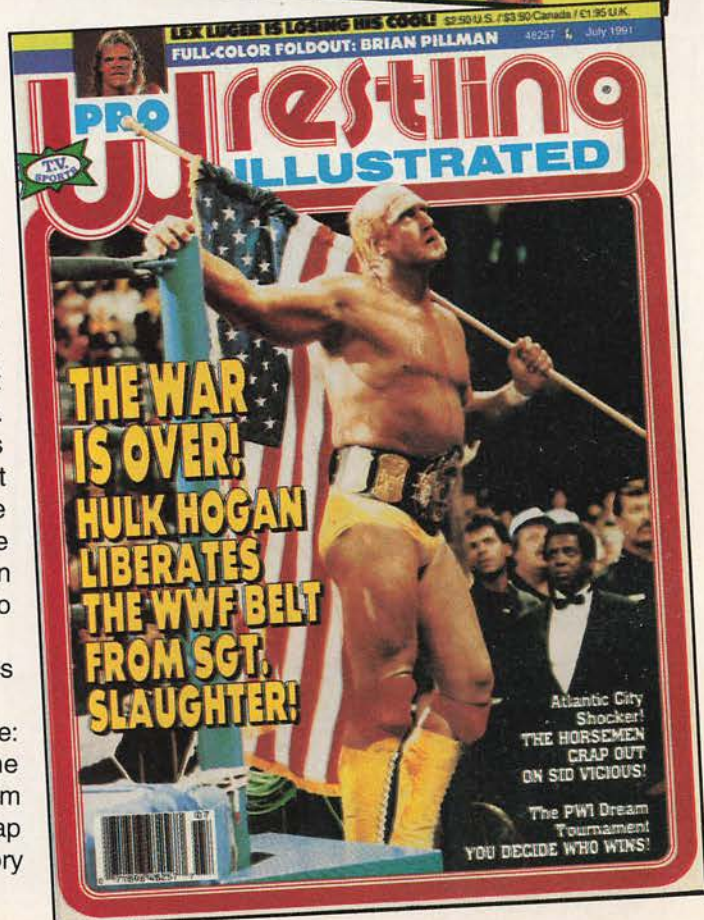


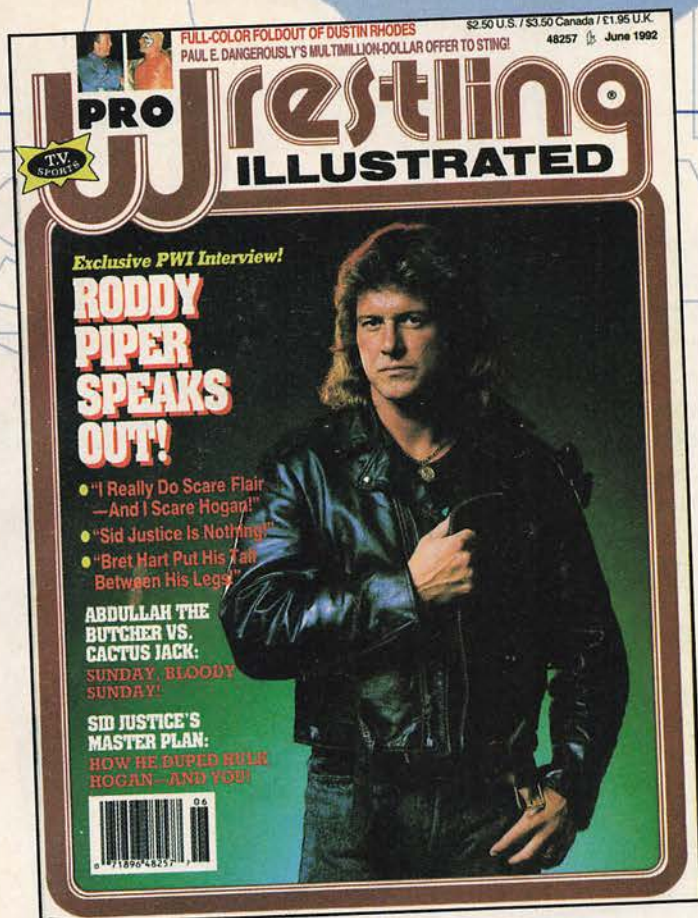
JULY 1991

Cover Story: Just as U.S. forces crushed those of Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War, Hulk Hogan crushed the traitorous Sgt. Slaughter, then an Iraqi sympathizer, at WrestleMania VII to win his third WWF World title. "The War Is Over! Hulk Hogan Liberates The WWF Belt From Sgt. Slaughter!" read the very appropriate headline. As the story pointed out, the victory wasn't as easy as many assumed it'd be, as the Sarge opened a large cut on Hogan's forehead and had a few near-falls before crumbling under the weight of a mighty legdrop from the "Hulkster." Slaughter would eventually become an American patriot again, but he would never get close to the World title again.

Eye-Catcher: Is Hogan looking up to the Hulkamaniacs in the upper deck—or someone much higher?

Also In This Issue: "Luger's Title Shots Go To Gigante: How Much Longer Can Lex Keep His Cool?" ... "The Demolition Of Demolition: The Collapse Of A Tag Team Dynasty" ... "Atlantic City Shocker! The Horsemen Crap Out On Sid Vicious!" ... Press Conference: Eric Embry ... Centerfold: Brian Pillman





Wrestling
25
years

JUNE 1992

Cover Story: Ask a question and Roddy Piper will give you an answer. An honest and interesting (and probably controversial!) one at that. He was honest and interesting (and controversial!) enough in our "Press Conference" with him to earn the cover. He had recently embarked on one of his many comebacks, destroying The Mountie to win the Intercontinental title, his first championship win in the WWF. Ric Flair, Hulk Hogan, Sid (Vicious) Justice, Bret Hart—even Mike Tyson and Mr. T—he let 'em all have it in some way or another during the interview. The "Rowdy Scot" was—and is—an interviewer's dream!

Eye-Catcher: The rear red highlights on Piper's hair against the green backdrop

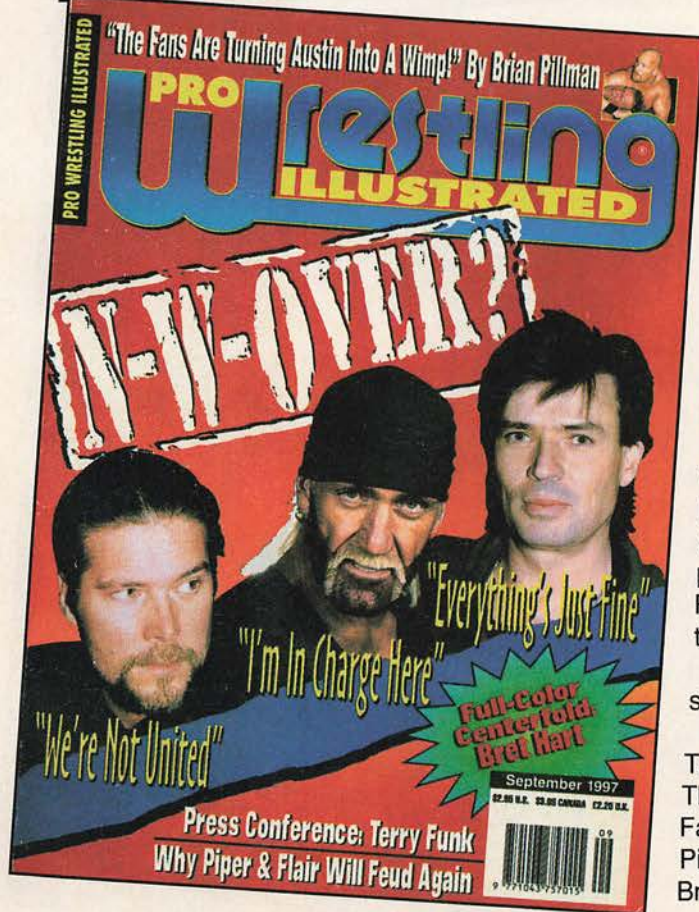
Also In This Issue: "Thumbs Down To The 'Psycho Yuppie': Paul E. Dangerously's Multimillion-Dollar Offer To Sting!" ... "Abdullah The Butcher vs. Cactus Jack: Sunday, Bloody Sunday!" ... "Sid Justice's Master Plan: How He Duped Hulk Hogan—And You!" ... "Another WWF Title Run? Randy Savage: Once More—With Flair!" ... "This'll Hurt Me More Than It Hurts You! The Pain Of Inflicting Pain" ... Centerfold: Dustin Rhodes

SEPTEMBER 1997

Cover Story: The party was N-W-Over in WCW! Or at least that's how it looked. The inevitable internal clashes between powerful members of a once-united New World Order were starting to happen. Quotes from Eric Bischoff, Hulk Hogan, and Kevin Nash that ran on the cover suggested these guys weren't thinking alike. The story itself delved a bit deeper into the conflicts that were fracturing the group, even though Bischoff insists all was well. One notable flare-up occurred when Hogan and Ted DiBiase, despite the objections of some other members, skipped one edition of *WCW Monday Nitro* to attend the premiere of a movie starring part-time NWO-ite Dennis Rodman. Things would only get worse from there—and they were never much better.

Eye-Catcher: Sometimes—rarely—the headline overshadows the cover image(s)

Also In This Issue: "Roddy Piper & Ric Flair: The Glad Talk Will Soon Turn To Mad Talk!" ... "It's Getting Hot At The Top: The Sizzling WWF World Title Scene!" ... "The Fans Are Turning Steve Austin Into A Wimp!" by Brian Pillman ... Press Conference: Terry Funk ... Centerfold: Bret Hart



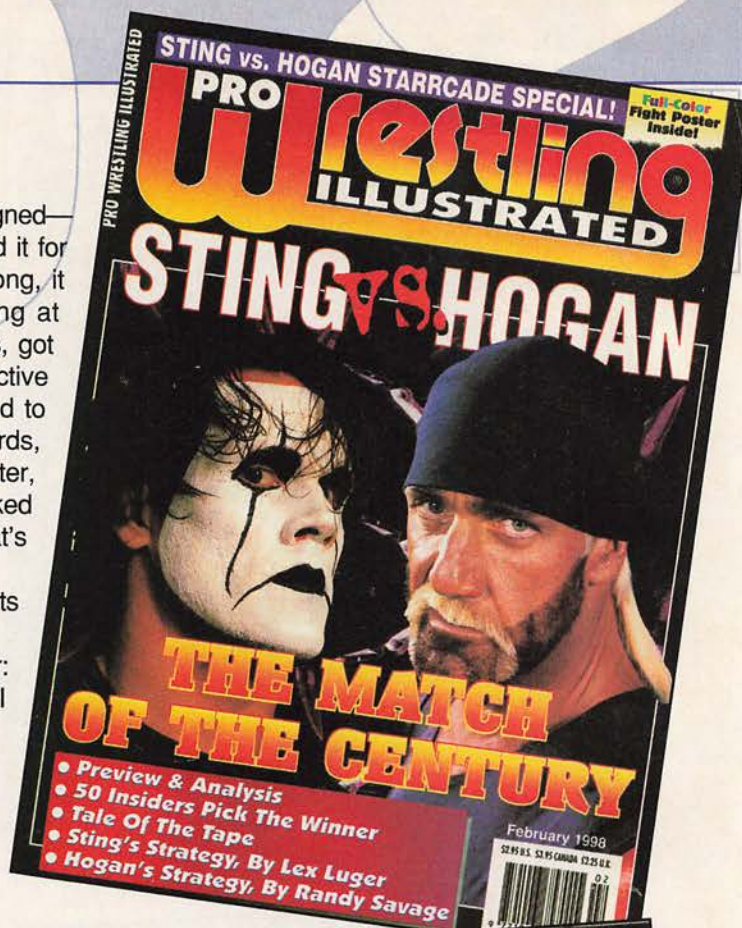
OUR 25 FAVORITE PWI COVERS

FEBRUARY 1998

Cover Story: It only took 97 years for it to finally get signed—the Match of the Century! Considering WCW built toward it for 15 months and kept Sting out of competition for that long, it didn't seem like we were overhyping Hogan vs. Sting at Starrcade 1997. *PWI* offered a full preview and analysis, got Randy Savage and Lex Luger to run down their respective strategies for the mega-match, indicated what both stood to gain and lose from the match, detailed their PPV records, printed a tale of the tape and full Hogan-Sting fight poster, and got 50 insiders to give us their predictions (30 picked Sting, 18 chose Hogan, two were undecided). Now that's some serious hype!

Eye-Catcher: The expressions on the tight head shots and the subtle purple texture behind both images

Also In This Issue: "From One Extreme To The Other: Perry Saturn's 'Miraculous' Recovery" ... "Mick Foley: 'I Became Dude Love For The Good Of Mankind!'"

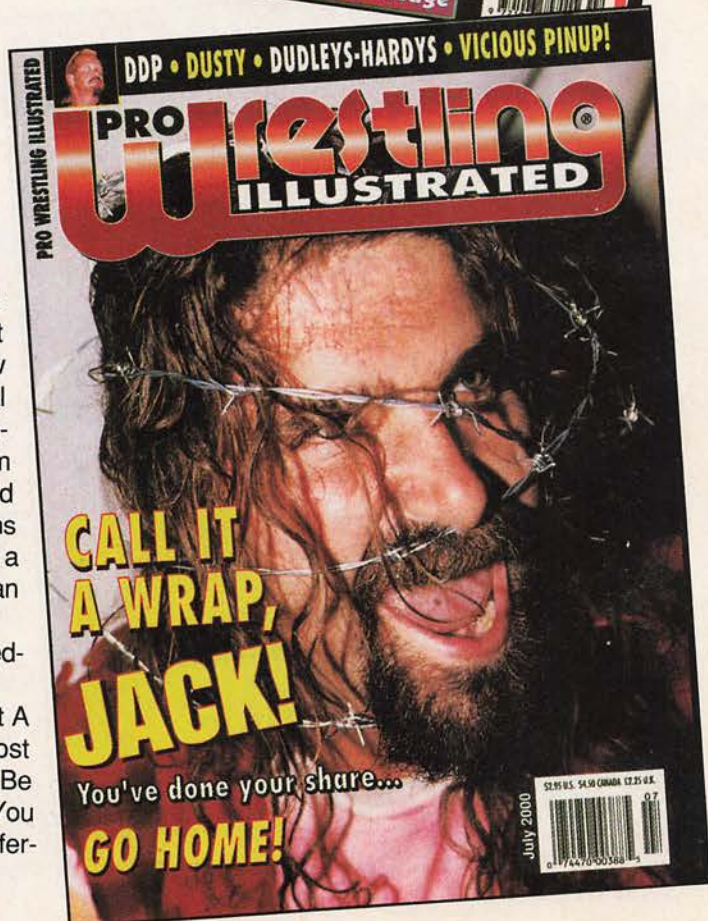


JULY 2000

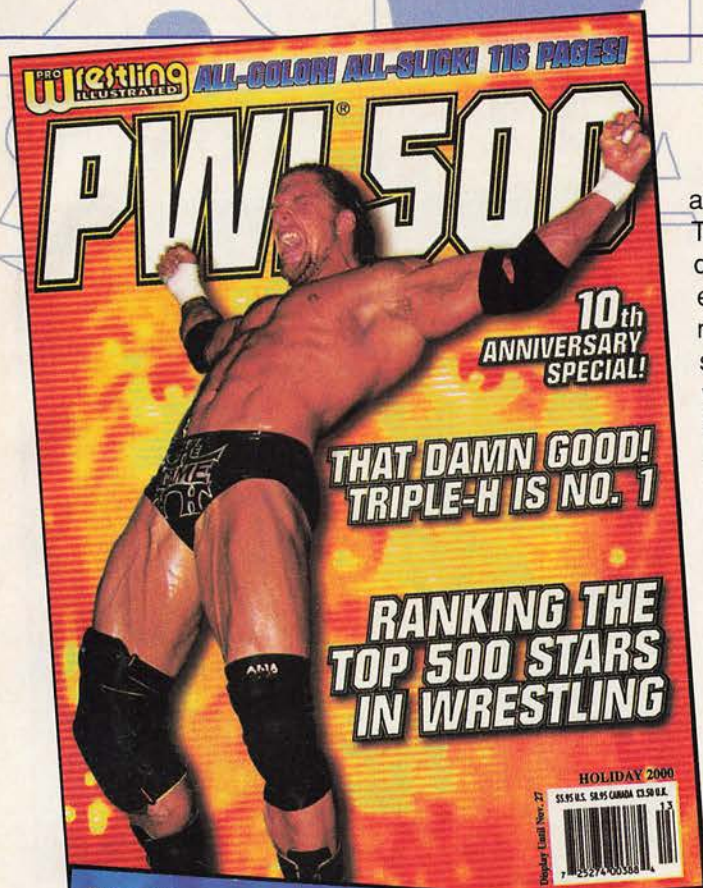
Cover Story: "Call It A Wrap, Jack! You've Done Your Share ... Go Home!" reads like a rather negative headline. *PWI* was telling Mick Foley to quit and calling the resurgence of Cactus Jack, one of his alter-egos, "sad." It was actually meant to be anything but negative. We knew about all the injuries he had suffered, the scary physical and mental problems that plagued him. We heard him discuss it all so candidly on ABC's *20/20*. We just wanted him to walk away in relatively good health so that he could enjoy his family and his life after wrestling. A few months later, Jack did hit the road. Foley has since returned for a few matches, but he's having a nice second career as an author.

Eye-Catcher: Not too many wrestlers pose with barbed wire around their heads ... it worked with this story

Also In This Issue: "Imagine, *Eef Yew Weel*, What A Prime-Time Dusty Would Have Done In ECW!" ... "Most Hated, DDP—Think About It! Aren't You Ashamed To Be Proud?" ... "The Dudleys vs. The Hardys: 10 Reasons You Will Never Forget This Tag Team War!" ... Press Conference: Disco Inferno ... Centerfold: Sid Vicious



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years

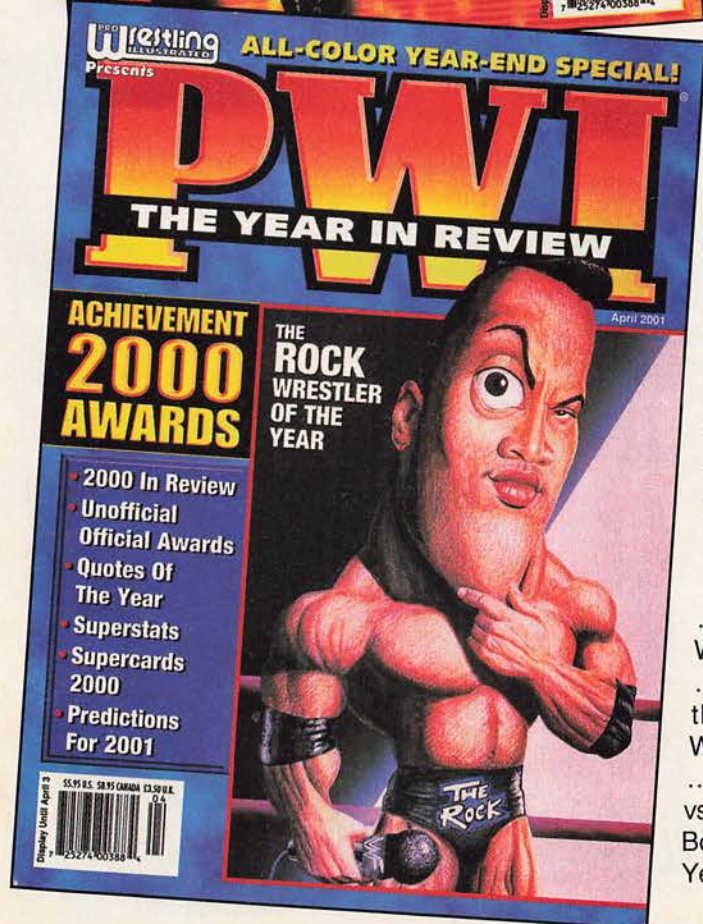


HOLIDAY 2000

Cover Story: It was "Game" time! Or, more appropriately, "The Game's" time! The edition of *PWI* featured Triple-H as the cover subject; the editors of the magazine deemed him worthy of the number-one spot in the 2000 edition of the "PWI 500." Really, it was just a two-horse race, for Mr. Helmsley and The Rock separated themselves from the rest of the pack and were the only wrestlers seriously considered for the top slot. "That Damn Good! 'The Game' Earns The Number-One Spot In The 'PWI 500'" chronicled—in pictures and text—Triple-H's rise to the upper echelon of the sport and included some very candid comments from him. "Those people who said I wouldn't get past the mid-card, I have no time for them," he told *PWI*. From HHH at number one to The California Kid at the back end of the list, it was our most in-depth version of the "500" to date.

Eye-Catcher: Hunter does this all the time, but not too many photographers capture it like this

Also In The Issue: "The Original Top 25: Where Have They Gone?" ... "Achievement Awards 2000: Vote For The Year's Best Wrestlers And Matches"



APRIL 2001

Cover Subject: This was the year-end issue after *PWI* made the permanent transition to full-color, and it needed to be special. So we went not with a beautiful posed color photograph of 2000 Wrestler of the Year The Rock, but rather with an unusual caricature of the people's champion drawn by Peter J. Battaglioli. Rock won the coveted Wrestler of the Year honors by taking 23,839 of the fans' votes compared to 23,626 for Triple-H.

Eye-Catcher: The illustration, especially the eye

Also In This Issue: Rookie of the Year: Kurt Angle ... Inspirational Wrestler: Booker T ... Most Improved Wrestler: Steve Corino ... Comeback of the Year: Rikishi ... Woman of the Year: Stephanie McMahon ... Feud of the Year: Triple-H vs. Kurt Angle ... Most Popular Wrestler: The Rock ... Most Hated Wrestler: Kurt Angle ... Feud of the Year: Christian & Edge vs. The Hardy Boyz vs. The Dudley Boyz ... Tag Team of the Year: The Hardy Boyz ... Editors' Award: Freddie Blassie ... "2000: The Year In Review"

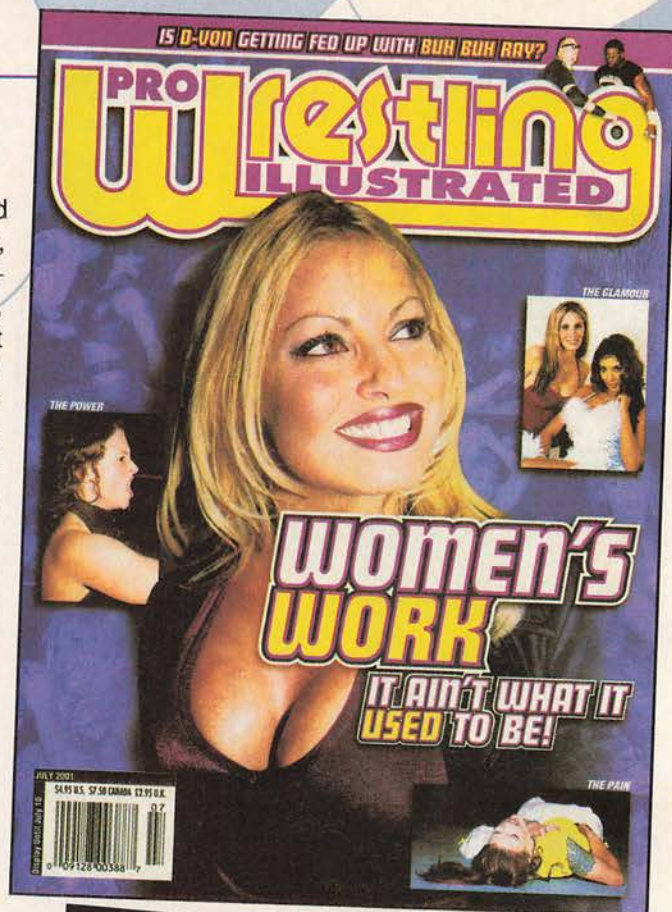
OUR 25 FAVORITE PWI COVERS

JULY 2001

Cover Story: "Women's Work! It Ain't What It Used To Be!" was the headline, and in reference to wrestling, who could argue? The role of the diva was ever-changing and expanding. Sure, sex still sold as well as ever, but a fantastic face and a beautiful body alone didn't guarantee any woman success in wrestling. We devoted eight pages to "women's work" and offered up a lot more than just delicious photographs. In addition to a very detailed analysis that included interesting comments from Madusa, a look at the lost art of women's wrestling, and an examination of the catfight craze, thumbnail sketches of the top women of the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s were provided.

Eye-Catcher: We like the way the design accentuates Trish's, uh, smile

Also In This Issue: "Turning The Tables! Is D-Von Getting Fed Up With Buh Buh Ray?" ... "Bravo, Chavo! You've Proven You're Not Just Eddie's Nephew!" ... "Avenging Aldo! Justin's Desperate Struggle For WWF Credibility" ... Press Conference: Francine

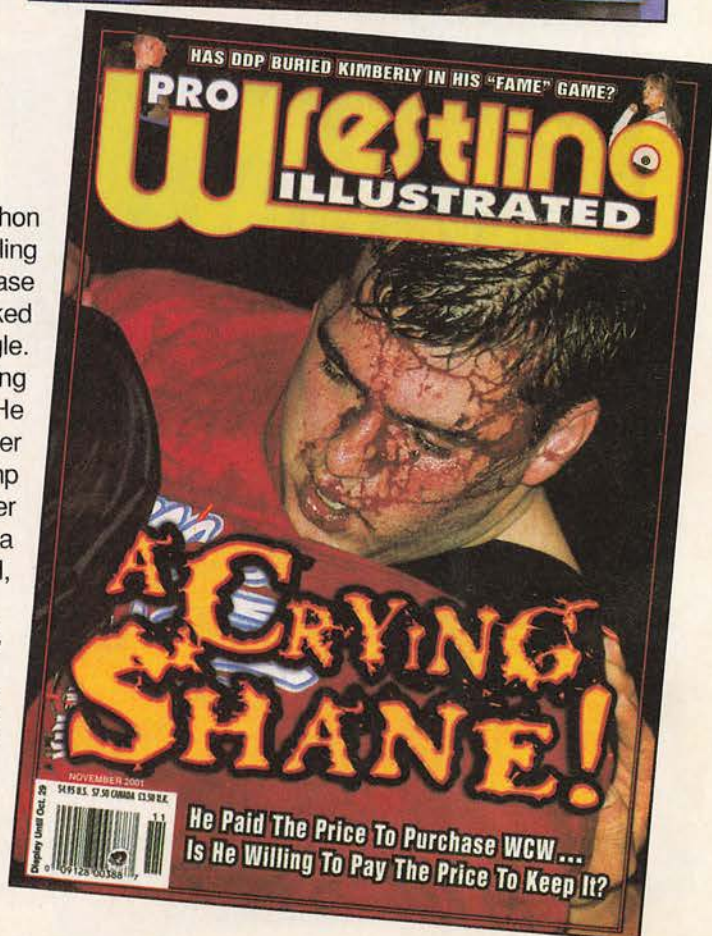


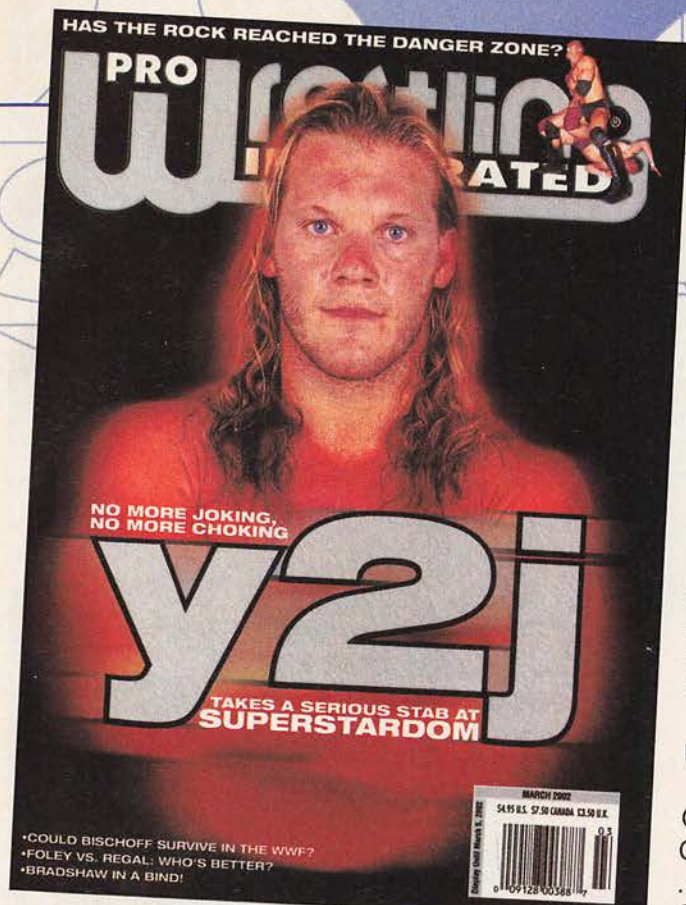
NOVEMBER 2001

Cover Story: Why in the blue hell would Shane McMahon be crying after pulling off the coup of a lifetime and stealing away WCW from his father just before Vince could purchase that company himself? He wasn't, actually. But he looked like he was after a bloodbath of a match with Kurt Angle. *PWI* asked a crucial question in the headline: "A Crying Shane! He Paid The Price To Purchase WCW ... Is He Willing To Pay The Price To Keep It?" We had to wonder how he'd be able to fully trust any wrestlers willing to jump from the WWF to join him in WCW. And we had to wonder how many more beatings he could take. If it seemed like a McMahon-controlled WCW was doomed to failure, well, you probably know how all that turned out.

Eye-Catcher: A rare close-up of a bleeding rich kid, plus a pretty snappy headline

Also In This Issue: "Has DDP Buried Kimberly In His 'Fame' Game?" ... "Special Subscribers Poll: Who Does The WWF Miss More—Triple-H Or The Rock?" ... "Three-Way Interpromotional Melee! Indy Wrestling Flourishes In Florida!" ... "Where For Art Thou, Spike-Eo? Will Romeo & Juliet 2001 End In Tragedy?" ... Press Conference: Edge





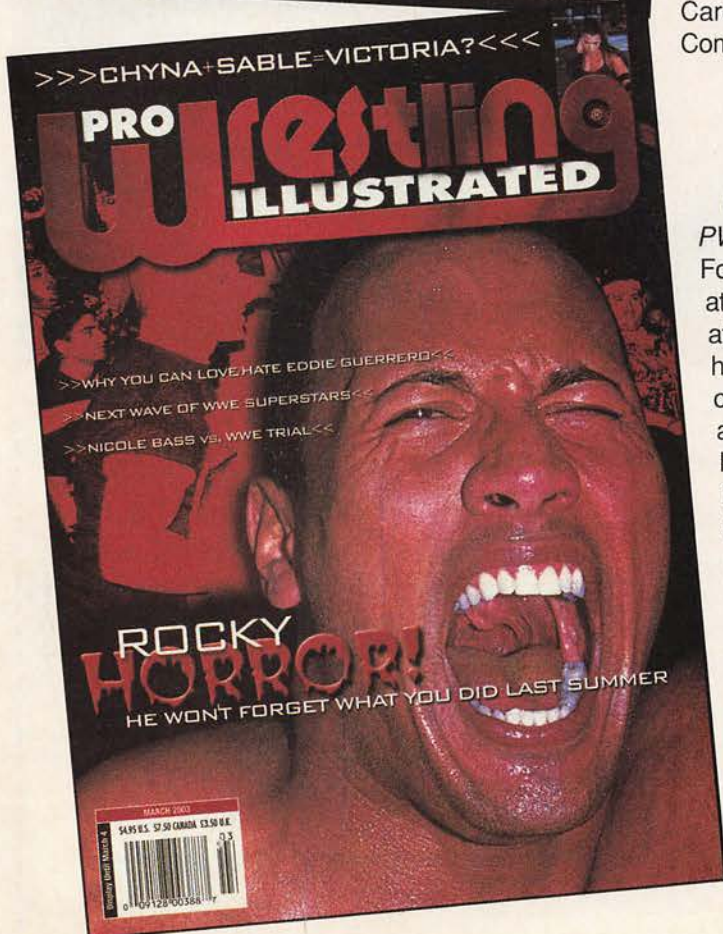
Wrestling
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MARCH 2002

Cover Story: Judging from his first appearance in the WWF—it featured a verbal sparring session with The Rock—Chris Jericho looked like a surefire main-eventer. He'd be a world champion within months, maybe even weeks, it seemed. The hype was that strong, and Jericho had the skills to justify it. But as entertaining as he was early in his WWF career, he just wasn't serious enough to earn a spot at the top of the card so easily. We thought that was changing two years later, as evidenced by the story "No More Joking, No More Choking: Y2J Takes A Serious Stab At Superstardom!" He had just beaten The Rock for the WCW World championship and was developing a harder edge. Within a few months (after the issue went to press), he had unified the WWF and WCW world titles.

Eye-Catcher: Art Director Greg Stevens does have Photoshop at his disposal and he knows how to use it

Also In This Issue: "The Knock On The Rock: Is The Great One Becoming Predictable?" ... "Old Grudges, New Opportunities: Could Eric Bischoff Survive In The WWE?" ... "Special Analysis: How Bradshaw Is Clotheslining His Career To Hell!" ... "Foley Vs. Regal: Who's The Better Commish?" ... Press Conference: Test



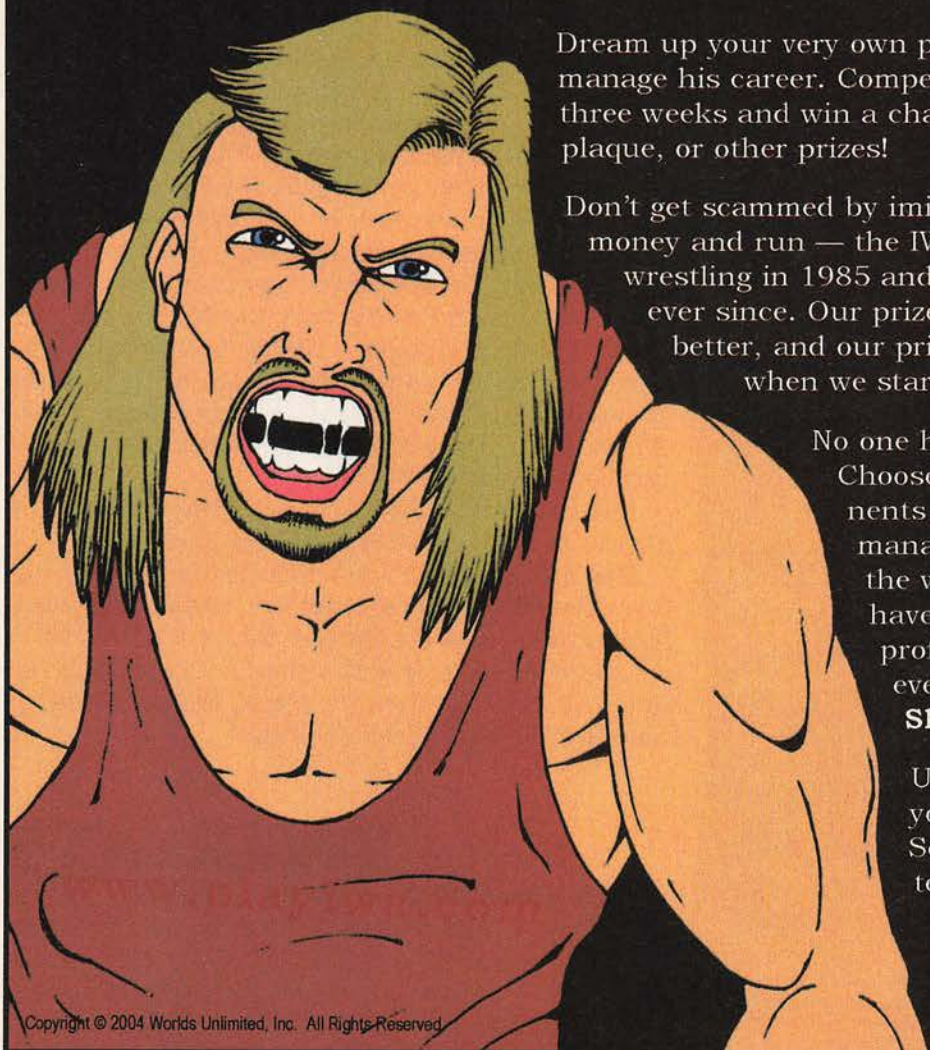
MARCH 2003

Cover Story: Playing off the titles of two popular films, *PWI* constructed the headline "Rocky Horror! He Won't Forget What You Did Last Summer." Rock, a fan favorite at the time, had been booed lustily by a New York crowd at SummerSlam even though he was supposed to be the hero defending the WWE title against villainous up-and-comer Brock Lesnar. It was to be his last WWE appearance for many months, since he was set to return to Hollywood to work on another movie. We reasoned that he wouldn't forget that crowd reaction and wouldn't be so fan-friendly upon his return to wrestling. And we were right. He returned as a cocky heel, which, in the bizarre world of pro wrestling, soon started to endear him to crowds again.

Eye-Catcher: Female readers had been badgering us for a shot of The Rock's uvula for years

Also In This Issue: "You Can Hate Eddie Guerrero—But You Have To Love Him, Too!" ... "The Next Wave: Is Superstardom Ahead For These WWE Hopefuls?" ... "Bass' Fishing Expedition: Jury Doesn't Take Bait In Suit Against WWE" ... "Victoria's No Longer A Secret: 'She's A Cross Between Chyna And Sable!'" ... Press Conference: Matt Hardy

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| 2 Arm drag | 22 Fireman's carry ram | 42 Leg sweep |
| 3 Arm lock | 23 Flying body press | 43 Manager interference |
| 4 Asian spike | 24 Flying clothesline | 44 Monkey flip |
| 5 Atomic drop | 25 Flying drop kick | 45 Overhead toss |
| 6 Bear hug | 26 Flying elbow drop | 46 Pole ram |
| 7 Bite | 27 Flying head butt | 47 Reverse chin lock |
| 8 Body slam | 28 Flying mare | 48 Rolling scissors |
| 9 Body tackle | 29 Forearm smash | 49 Rope burn |
| 10 Bulldog | 30 Foreign object | 50 Russian sickle |
| 11 Chicken wing | 31 Full nelson | 51 Savate kick |
| 12 Choke slam | 32 Giant swing | 52 Scissors grip |
| 13 Claw | 33 Grapevine | 53 Shoulder breaker |
| 14 Clothesline | 34 Hair pull | 54 Slingshot |
| 15 Cross body block | 35 Hammer lock | 55 Snap mare |
| 16 Double axehandle | 36 Head lock | 56 Step-over toe hold |
| 17 Drop kick | 37 Head stomp | 57 Suplex |
| 18 Eagle split | 38 Hip roll | 58 Surfboard |
| 19 Elbow smash | 39 Irish whip | 59 Tumbuckle smash |
| 20 Eye gouge | 40 Knee drop | 60 Wrist lock |
| 61 Abdominal stretch | 71 Cradle | 81 Power bomb |
| 62 Avalanche | 72 Crucifix | 82 Power slam |
| 63 Backbreaker | 73 DDT | 83 Scorpion deathlock |
| 64 Backroll press | 74 Figure four | 84 Sleeper |
| 65 Belly to belly | 75 Flying leg drop | 85 Slingshot suplex |
| 66 Big splash | 76 Gourd buster | 86 Spine buster |
| 67 Boston crab | 77 Hurricane | 87 Stunner |
| 68 Brain buster | 78 Moonsault | 88 Sunset flip |
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| 70 Cobra clutch | 80 Piledriver | 90 Texas cloverleaf |

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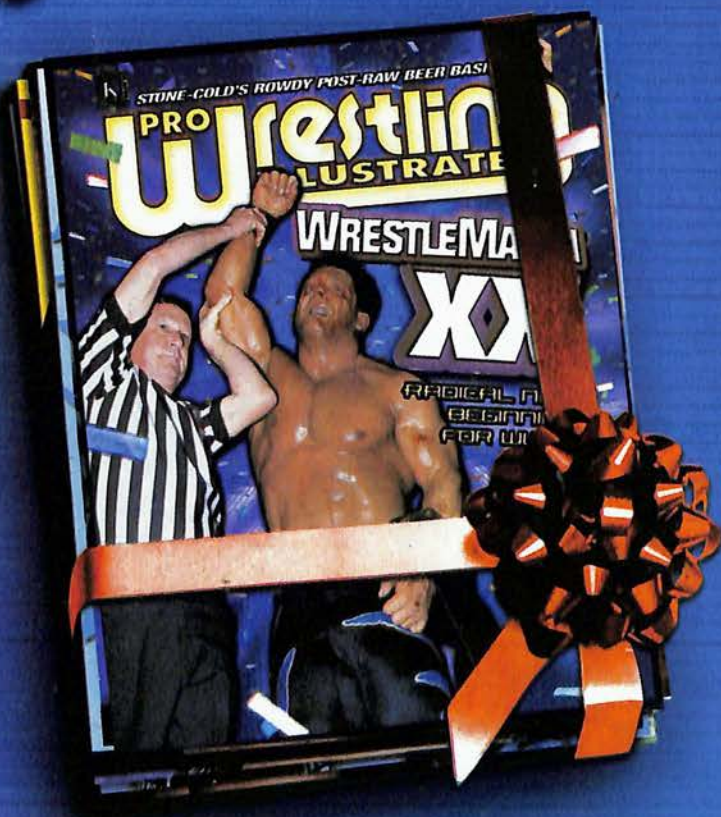
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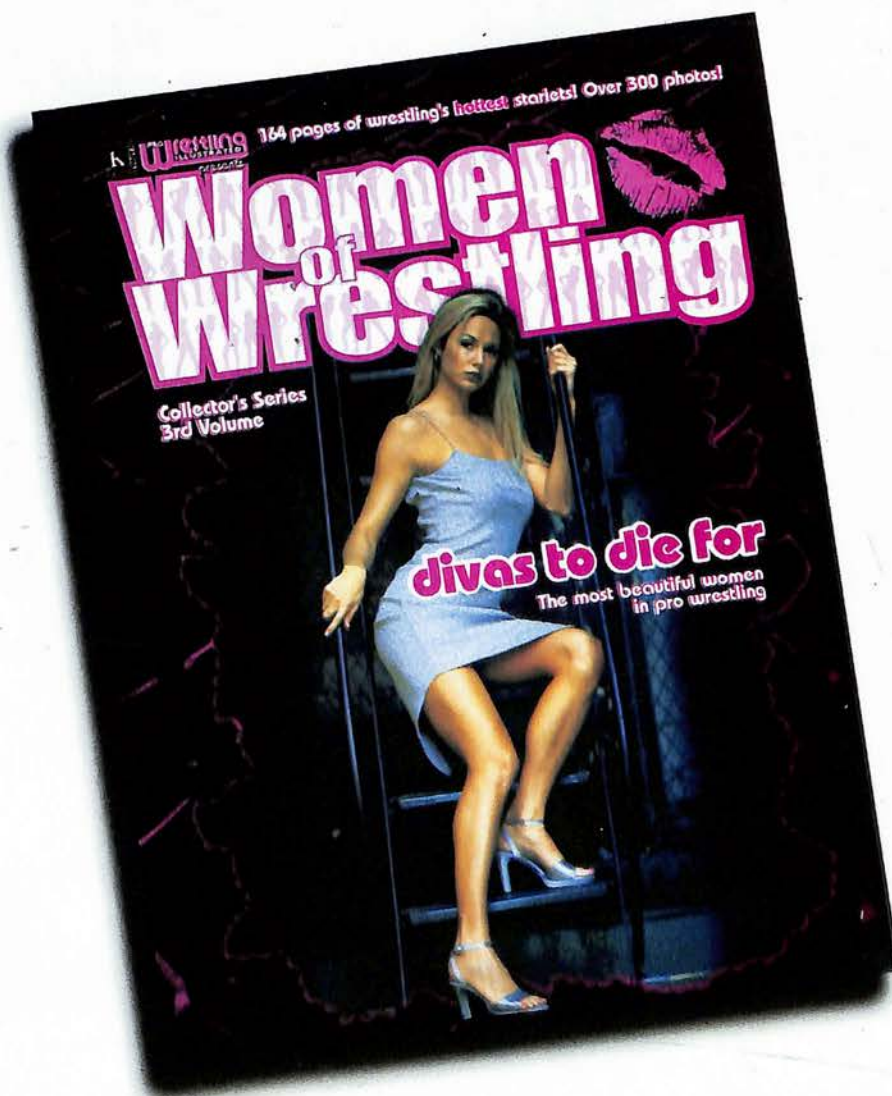
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